



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



HARVARD
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

32

AN IN EGYPT,

FROM CAIRO,

IN THREE OR FOUR VOLS.

NE, Eng.

SEEN EGYPTIAN.

STER,

Lane Poole

-VOL. I.







THE
"ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT,"

LETTERS FROM CAIRO,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE THERE IN 1842, 3, & 4,

WITH

E. W. LANE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF 'THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.'

BY HIS SISTER,

Mrs. Sophia (Lane) Cooke

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

LONDON:
CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO.,
LUDGATE-STREET.

1845.

THE
ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT,

LETTERS FROM CAIRO,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE THERE IN 1842, 3, & 4,

WITH

E. W. LANE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF 'THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.'

BY HIS SISTER,

Mrs. Sophia (Lane) Cooke

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO.,
LUDGATE-STREET.

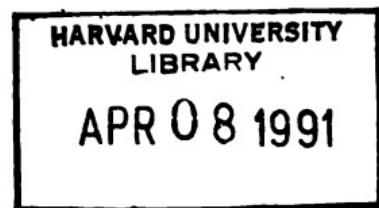
1845.

I682

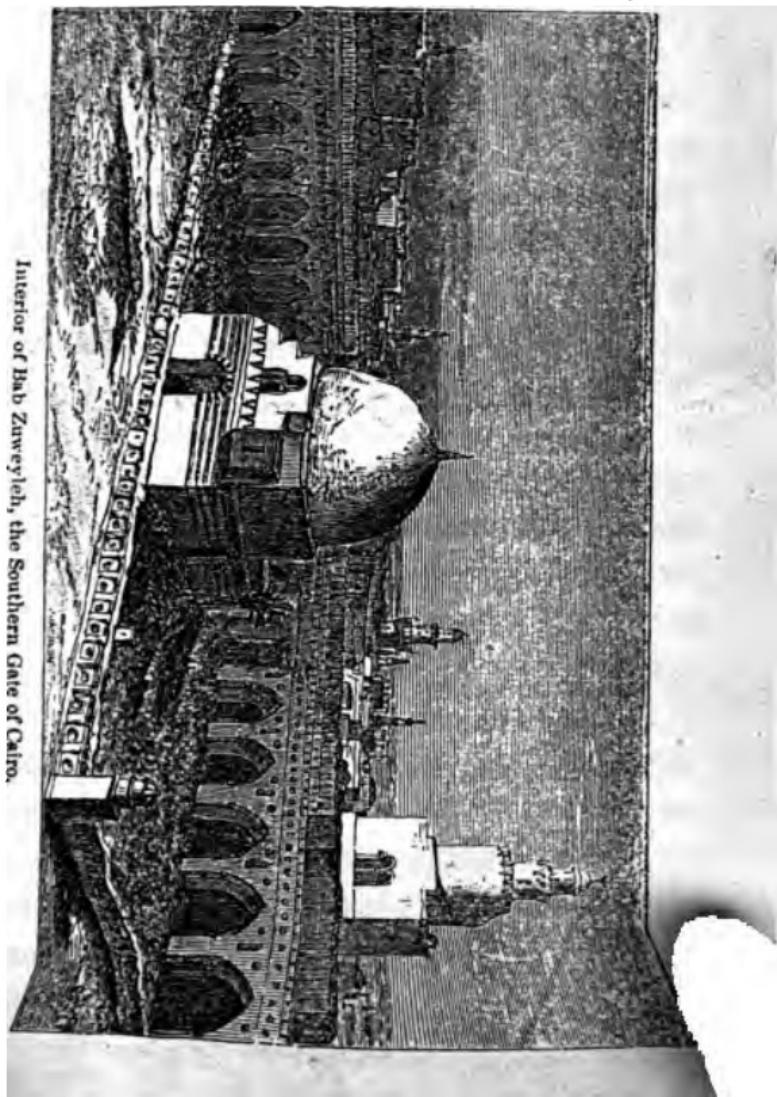
98.45.3

1881, Dec. 31.
Not found

3978.45.3



LONDON:
PUB BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS
STAMFORD STREET.



Interior of Bab Zuweyléh, the Southern Gate of Cairo.



P R E F A C E.

THE desire of shortening the period of my separation from a beloved brother, was the first and strongest motive that induced me to think of accompanying him to the country in which I am now writing, and which he was preparing to visit for the third time. An eager curiosity, mainly excited by his own publications, greatly increased this desire ; and little persuasion on his part was necessary to draw me to a decision ; but the idea was no sooner formed than he found numerous arguments in its favour. The opportunities I might enjoy of obtaining an insight into the mode of life of the higher classes of the ladies in this country, and of seeing many things highly interesting in themselves, and rendered more so by their being accessible only to a lady, suggested to him the idea that I might both gratify my own curiosity and *collect much information of a novel*

interesting nature, which he proposed I should embody in a series of familiar letters to a friend. To encourage me to attempt this latter object, he placed at my disposal a large collection of his own unpublished notes, that I might extract from them, and insert in my letters whatever I might think fit; and in order that I might record my impressions and observations with less restraint than I should experience if always feeling that I was writing for the press, he promised me that he would select those letters which he should esteem suitable for publication, and mark them to be copied. The present selection has been made by him; and I fear the reader may think that affection has sometimes biassed his judgment; but am encouraged to hope for their favourable reception, for the sake of the more solid matter with which they are interspersed, from the notes of one to whom Egypt has become almost as familiar as England.

SOPHIA POOLE.

C O N T E N T S.

LETTER I.

Approach to Alexandria—Old and new harbours—General aspect of the town—Costume and appearance of the inhabitants—Shops and shopkeepers—European part of town—Pharos (or lighthouse) Pages 13-24

LETTER II.

Situation and construction of Alexandria—Supply of water—Climate and degree of salubrity—Telegraphs—City wall—Cleopatra's Needle—Pompey's Pillar—Tradition respecting the burning of the Alexandrian Library—Necropolis of Alexandria pp. 27-44

LETTER III.

Voyage from Alexandria to Cairo—Canal from Alexandria to the Nile—Boats on the Nile—Town of Fooweh—Village of Shubra Kheet—Ancient town of Sais, and present state of the remains—Egyptian festivals—Voyage up the Nile—Boats and boatmen—Instances of mirage—Banks of the Nile—Arrival at Boulak, and equipment in Egyptian costume—Ride from Boulak to Cairo pp. 45-66



ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT,

LETTERS FROM CAIRO,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE THERE IN 1842, 3, & 4,

WITH

E. W. LANE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF 'THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.'

BY HIS SISTER,

Mrs. Sophia (Lane) Poole

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

London:

**CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO.,
LUDGATE-STREET.**

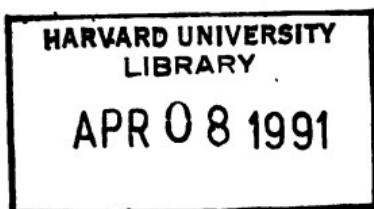
1845.

I682

Afr 3978.45.3

1881, see. 31.
Not found

Afr 3978.45.3



LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS
STAMFORD STREET.

THE
"ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT,"

LETTERS FROM CAIRO,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE THERE IN 1842, 3, & 4,

WITH

E. W. LANE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE MODERN EGYPTIANS."

BY HIS SISTER,

Mrs. Sophia (Lane) Poole

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO.,
LUDGATE-STREET.

1845.

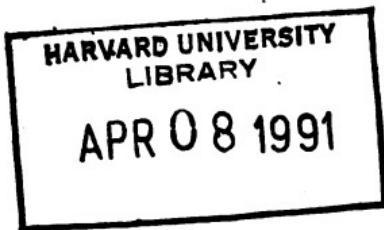
I 682

~~Af 3978.45.3~~

1881, see. 31.

Not found

Af 3978.45.3



LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS
STAMFORD STREET.

THE ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT.

LETTER I.

Alexandria, July, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE blessing of going into port, at the conclusion of a first long voyage, awakens feelings so deep and so lasting, that it must form a striking era in the life of every traveller. Eagerly, during a long morning, did I and my children strain our eyes as the low uninteresting coast of Egypt spread before our view, that we might catch the first glimpse of one or more of those monuments of which we had hitherto only heard or read. The first object which met our view was the Arab Tower, which stands on a little elevation; and shortly after, the new lighthouse on the peninsula of the Pharos, and the Pasha's army of windmills, showed our near approach to Alexandria, and the

Pillar (commonly called Pompey's) seemed to rise from the bay.

The coast presents to the Mediterranean a long sandy flat, bearing throughout a most desolate aspect, and in no part more so than in the neighbourhood of Alexandria. To the west of this town we see nothing but a tract of yellowish calcareous rock and sand, with here and there a few stunted palm-trees, which diversify but little the dreary prospect.

The old or western harbour (anciently called Eunostus Portus) is deeper and more secure than the new harbour (which is called Magnus Portus). The former, which was once exclusively appropriated to the vessels of the Muslims, is now open to the ships of all nations; and the latter, which was "the harbour of the infidels," is almost deserted. The entrance of the old harbour is rendered difficult by reefs of rocks, leaving three natural passages, of which the central has the greatest depth of water. The rocks occasion a most unpleasant swell, from which we all suffered, but I especially; and I cannot describe how thankfully I stepped on shore, having passed the smooth water of the harbour. Here already I see so much upon which to remark, that I must indulge myself by writing two or three letters before our arrival in Cairo, where the state of *Arabian* society being unaltered by European innovations, I hope to observe much that will in-

terest you with respect to the condition of the native female society... I do not mean to give you many remarks on the manners and customs of the male portion of the people, my brother having written so full a description of them, the correctness of which has been attested by numerous persons, who cannot be suspected (as his sister might be) of undue partiality.

To tell you of our landing, of the various and violent contentions of the Arab boatmen for the conveyance of our party, of our really polite reception at the custom-house, and of our thankfulness when enjoying the quiet of our hotel, would be to detain you from subjects far more interesting ; but I long to describe the people by whom we were surrounded, and the noisy crowded streets and lanes through which we passed. The streets, until we arrived at the part of the town inhabited by Franks, were so narrow that it was extremely formidable to meet anything on our way. They are miserably close, and for the purpose of shade the inhabitants have in many cases thrown matting from roof to roof, extending across the street, with here and there a small aperture to admit light ; but the edges of these apertures are generally broken, and the torn matting hanging down : in short, the whole appearance is gloomy and wretched. I ought not, however, to complain of the narrowness of the streets, for where the sun is nat

exclosed by matting, the deep shade produced by the manner in which the houses are constructed is most welcome in this sunny land ; and, indeed, when we arrived at the Frank part of the town, which is in appearance almost European, and where a wide street and a fine open square form a singular contrast to the Arab part of the town, we scarcely congratulated ourselves ; for the heat was intense, and we hastened to our hotel, and gratefully enjoyed the breeze which played through the apartments. I hear that many persons prefer the climate of Alexandria to that of Cairo, and pronounce it to be more salubrious ; but a Caireen tells me that their opinion is false—that it is certainly cooler, but that the air is extremely damp, and although the inhabitants generally enjoy a sea breeze, that luxury involves some discomfort.

But I must tell you of the people ; for there appeared to my first view none but dignified grandees, in every variety of costume, and miserable beggars, so closely assembled in the narrow streets that it seemed as though they had congregated on the occasion of some public festival. On examining more closely, however, I found many gradations in the style of dress of the middle and higher classes ; but the manner of the Eastern (even that of the well-clothed servant) is so distinguished, and their carriage is so superior, that a European glancing

rst time at their picturesque costume, and

observing their general bearing, may be perfectly at a loss as to what may be their position in society.

I believe that I have already seen persons of almost every country bordering on the Mediterranean, and I can convey but a very imperfect idea of such a scene. The contrast between the rich and gaudy habits of the higher classes, and the wretched clothing of the bare-footed poor, while many children of a large growth are perfectly in a state of nudity, produced a most remarkable effect. The number of persons nearly or entirely blind, and especially the aged blind, affected us exceedingly, but we rejoiced in the evident consideration they received from all who had occasion to make room for them to pass. I should imagine that all who have visited this country have remarked the decided respect which is shown to those who are superior in years; and that this respect is naturally rendered to the beggar as well as to the prince. In fact, the people are educated in the belief that there is honour in the "hoary head," and this glorious sentiment strengthens with their strength, and beautifully influences their conduct.

Many of the poor little infants called forth painfully my sympathy: their heads drooped languidly; and their listless, emaciated limbs showed too plainly that their little race was nearly run while the evident tenderness of their mothers was

me grieved to think what they might be called on, to endure. You will naturally infer that I expect few children to pass the season of infancy, and you will conclude justly; for I cannot look at these little creatures, and suppose that they will survive what is here the most trying time, the season of dentition. I may have been unfortunate; for among the numerous infants we have passed, I have only seen two who were able to hold their heads in an erect position, and, indeed, of those past infancy, most were very wretched-looking children. Over their dark complexions there is a white leprous hue, and they have a quiet melancholy manner, and an air of patient endurance, which affected me sensibly.

It is sad to see the evident extreme poverty of the lower orders; and the idle, lounging manner of the working class surprised me: and yet when called on to labour, I am informed that no people work so heartily, and so patiently. I rather think they are very like their good camels in disposition, with the exception that the latter scold often if an attempt be made to overload them, and in some cases will not rise from their knees until relieved of part of their burden, while the Arabs really suffer themselves to be built up with loads as though they had no more sense of oppression than a truck or a wheelbarrow. The Arab groom, too, will run by the side of his master's horse for

as many hours as he requires, his attendance without a murmur. The physical strength of these people is most extraordinary. I had an opportunity of remarking this during the removal of our luggage from the boat.

The windows of our hotel command a view of the great square, and I can scarcely describe to you the picturesque attraction of the scene. Among the various peculiarities of dress, feature, and complexion, which characterize the natives of Africa and the East, none are more striking than those which distinguish the noble and hardy western Bedawee, enveloped as he is in his ample woollen shirt, or hooded cloak, and literally clothed suitably for a Russian winter. You will believe that my attention has been directed to the veiled women, exhibiting in their dull disguise no other attraction than a degree of stateliness in their carriage, and a remarkable beauty in their large dark eyes, which, besides being sufficiently distinguished by nature, are rendered more conspicuous by the black border of kohl round the lashes, and by the concealment of the rest of the features. The camel-drivers' cries of "O'a," "Guarda," and "Sákin,"* resound every where, and at every moment, therefore, you may imagine the noise and confusion in the streets.

* "Take care," in Arabic, Italian, and Turkish.

In the open space before the house there are long rows of coarse chairs with woven backs, or else mats of matting, winding slowly and reluctantly along over in the wide place, while the drivers drag and their dogs pull. I might strike at inferior work, as more distinguishes them from all other names of burden.

I must not now mentionning the slaves of Alexandria, for they resemble captives rather than slaves: and this I understand to be the case in most Indian and Arabic cities. A raised seat of brick or stone about three feet high, and the same or more in width, stands along each side of the street, and upon this the tradesman sits before his shop, either smoking or at work. It is really surprising to see how easily they appear to gain their livelihood: the fact is, that they are an exceedingly occupied people, and there is much of real philosophy in their conclusions. They are seldom disposed, when working on their own account, to labour for more than enough, and have the quality, so rarely found in Europe, of considering that enough is as desirable as abundance: therefore they are happy, and "their best riches, ignorance of wealth." I have observed, at corners of the streets, or wherever else there was sufficient space, groups of men and women seated on the ground, with baskets before them containing bread and vegetables for sale.

"The quarter occupied by the Europeans is the south-eastern part of the town; by the shore of the new harbour. This situation I conclude was chosen for the convenience of landing and shipping their merchandise; but now that the old harbour is open to their vessels, the situation is not so advantageous for them. On the east side of the great square is a large building called the New Wekáleh (by the Europeans Occále), for the reception of merchants and others, on the shore of the new harbour. It surrounds a spacious square court; and the ground-floor of the building consists of magazines towards the court, and shops and the entrances of the dwellings towards the exterior.

My brother has given me a piece of information with regard to the present Pharos, which you shall receive in his own words :—

"The modern Pharos is a poor successor of the ancient building, erected by Sostratus Cnidius, from which it derives its name; though from a distance it has rather an imposing appearance. Several Arab historians mention the telescopic mirror of metal which was placed at the summit of the ancient Pharos. In this mirror, vessels might be discerned at sea at a very great distance. El-Makreezee* informs us that the Greeks, being

* El-Makreezee flourished in the 14th and 15th centuries.

desirous of effecting the destruction of the Pharos, or of obtaining possession of the wonderful mirror, employed a deep stratagem. One of their countrymen repaired to the sovereign of the Arabs, El-Weleed the son of 'Abd-el-Melik, and professed himself a convert to the faith of El-Islám, pretending that he had fled from his king, who would have put him to death. He informed the prince that he had acquired, from certain books in his possession, the art of discovering where treasures were concealed in the earth, and had thus ascertained that there was a valuable treasure, consisting of money and jewels, deposited beneath the foundations of the Pharos of Alexandria. The prince, deceived by this artful tale, sent a number of workmen with his crafty adviser to pull down the Pharos; and when more than half the building had been destroyed, the Greek made his escape to his own country, and his artifice thus became manifest. The same author relates that part of the Pharos was thrown down by an earthquake in the year of the Flight 177 (A.D. 793-4); that Ahmad Ibn-Tooloon surmounted it with a dome of wood; and that an inscription upon a plate of lead was found upon the northern side, buried in the earth, written in ancient Greek characters, every letter of which was a cubit in height, and a span in breadth. This was perhaps the inscription placed by the original architect, and which, according to Strabo,

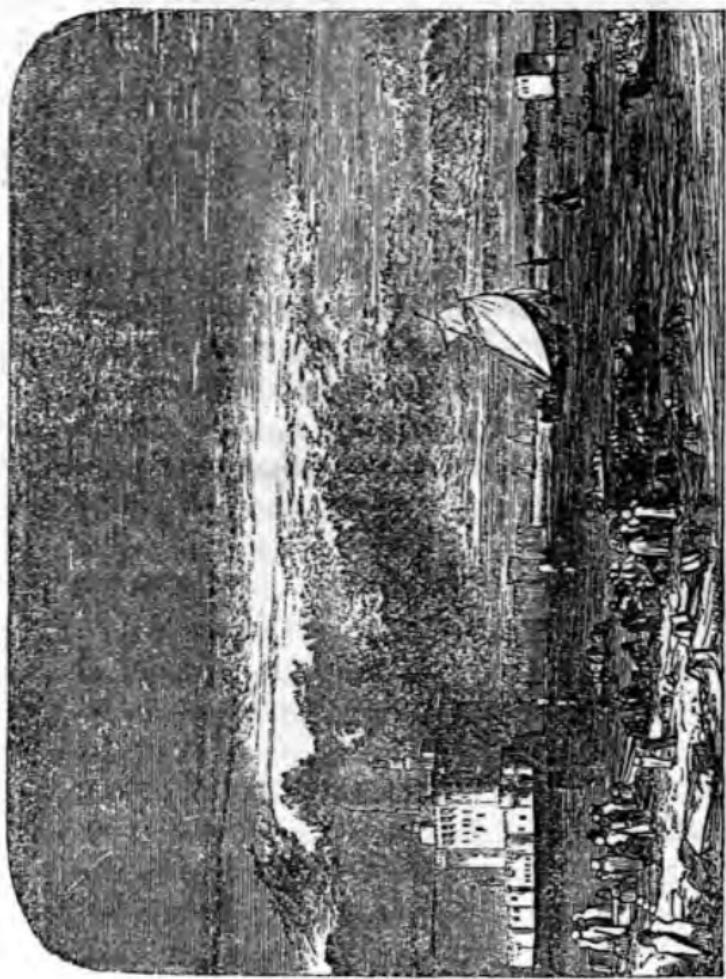
was to "this effect—' Sostratus Cnidius, the son of Dexiphanes, to the protecting Gods, for the sake of the mariners.' It is also related by Es-Sooyoo-tee,* that the inhabitants of Alexandria likewise made use of the mirror above mentioned to burn the vessels of their enemies, by directing it so as to reflect the concentrated rays of the sun upon them."

The causeway of stone which connects the fort and lighthouse with the peninsula of Pharos, is now called Rôdat-et-Teen (or the Garden of the Fig), on account of a few fig-trees growing there. Its south-western extremity is called Râs-et-Teen (or the Cape of the Fig). Upon this rocky peninsula are a palace of the Pasha, and some other buildings, with the burial-ground of the Muslims, adjacent to the town.

I must endeavour in my next letter to give you a brief general account of the town, and must close this by remarking on the affecting sound of the Mueddin's chant or Muslim call to prayer. I should be grieved to think that we are impressed by the solemnity of their sonorous voices, simply because we hear them for the first time ; and trust we may always feel a mixture of pity and admiration when we believe our fellow-creatures to be in

* A celebrated Arab theologian and historian, so called from his birth-place Usyoot, or Suyoot (commonly pronounced Asyoot), in Upper Egypt.

earnest in the service of God, however mistaken their opinions. The sight of the Muslim engaged in his devotions I think most interesting ; and it cannot fail, I should hope, in impressing the beholder with some degree of veneration. The attitudes are peculiarly striking and expressive ; and the solemn demeanour of the worshipper, who, even in the busy market-place, appears wholly abstracted from the concerns of the world, is very remarkable. The practice of praying in a public place is so general in the East, and attracts so little notice on the part of Muslims, that we must be charitable, and must not regard it as a result of hypocrisy or ostentation.



Alexandria.

LETTER II.

Alexandria, July, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We find little to interest us in this place, excepting by association with bygone times ; therefore our stay will not be long. But I will give you concisely an account of all that has excited our curiosity.

I am not disappointed in Alexandria (or, as it is called by the natives, El-Iskendereeyeh), for I did not imagine it could possess many attractions. It is built upon a narrow neck of land, which unites the peninsula of Pharos to the continent, and thus forms a double harbour, as did anciently the causeway, which, from its length of seven stadia, was called the Heptastadium.

The ground which is occupied by the modern town has been chiefly formed by a gradual deposit of sand on each side of the Heptastadium ; and the present situation is more advantageous for a commercial city than the ancient site. The houses are generally built of white calcareous stone, with a profusion of mortar and plaster. Some have the foundation walls only of stone, and the super-

structure of brick. They generally have plain or projecting windows of wooden lattice-work ; but the windows of some houses, viz., those of Europeans, the palaces of the Pasha, the governor of Alexandria, and a few others, are of glass. The roofs are flat and covered with cement. There is little to admire in the interior architecture of the houses, excepting that they have a substantial appearance. Many ancient columns of granite and marble have been used in the construction of the mosques and private dwellings.

The water here is far from good ; the inhabitants receive their supply from the cisterns under the site of the ancient city (of which I must tell you by and bye). These are filled by subterranean aqueducts from the canal during the time of the greatest height of the Nile ; but in consequence of the saline nature of the soil through which it passes from the river, the water is not good. Almost every house has its cistern, which is filled by means of skins borne by camels or asses ; and there are many wells of brackish water in the town.

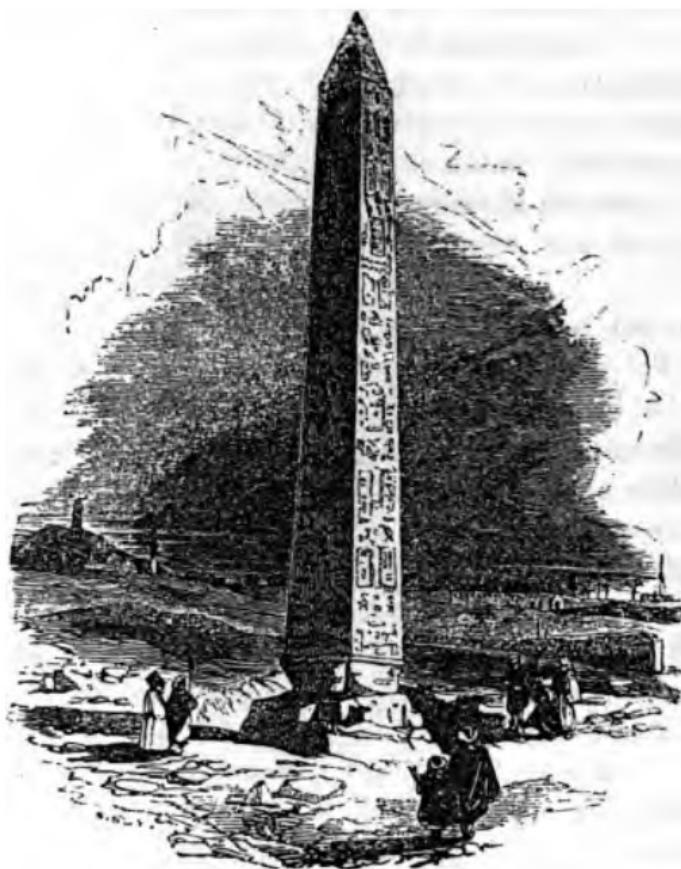
As the northern coast of Egypt has no harbour, excepting those of Alexandria, it is a place of considerable importance as the emporium and key of Egypt ; but otherwise it appears to me in no respect a desirable residence, and around it nothing but sea and desert meets the eye, excepting here there the house of a rich man, and scattered in

every direction extensive mounds of rubbish. Ancient writers have extolled the *salubrity* of the air of Alexandria. This quality of the air was attributed, according to Strabo, to the almost insular situation of the city, the sea being on one side, and the lake Mareotis on the other. The *insalubrity* of the climate, of later years, has been regarded as the result of the conversion of the lake into a salt marsh. The English army, in 1801, made a cut by which the water of the sea was admitted from the lake of Aboo-Keer into the bed of the lake Mareotis ; and the operation was repeated by Mohammed 'Alee in 1803, and again by the English in 1807 : on each occasion, as you will have supposed, military policy dictated the measure ; and as soon as the object in view had been attained, the gap was speedily closed, as it cut off the supply of fresh water from Alexandria by interrupting the course of the canal. While the communication between the two lakes remained open, it was not found that the climate of Alexandria was at all improved ; and the evaporation of the waters of the lake Mareotis afterwards must have had a pernicious effect. The damp and rain during the winter here, and the heavy dew at night throughout the year, have a particularly baneful influence. Cases of fever are very general ; and it is always observed that this town is one of the places where the plague makes its appearance many days earlier than in the inte-

rior of Egypt. With all these objections to Alexandria as a place of residence, it is wonderful that any persons should prefer it, and consider the climate more agreeable than that of the valley of the Nile, which all allow to be so salubrious.

There is a series of telegraphs from Alexandria to the metropolis, a distance of more than a hundred and twenty British miles. The towers composing this series are nineteen in number; the first is on the peninsula of Pharos, and the last in the citadel of Cairo.

The wall which surrounds the site of the old Arab city was rebuilt not many years since. This work was commenced in 1811. Mohammed 'Alee, fearing another invasion of the French, deemed it necessary to strengthen this place; for the wall I have mentioned defends the town on the land-side, and surrounds the cisterns from which the inhabitants derive their supply of fresh water. The wall has four gates; and I cannot describe to you the complete scene of desolation which presented itself on entering the enclosure by that gate which is nearest to the modern town, the "sea-gate;" indeed, it can scarcely be conceived: for mounds of rubbish and drifted sand occupy nearly the whole site of the ancient city. Within the area surrounded by the present wall, besides some monuments of the ancient city, are two convents and a synagogue, several groups of houses and huts, with



Cleopatra's Needle.

a few walled gardens containing chiefly palm-trees.

You will think it strange when I tell you that there are also two lofty hills of rubbish, each of which is surmounted by a fort, commanding an extensive view. It appears to me most extraordinary that any persons should choose such a foundation; but I understand it is far from remarkable, and that these accidental eminences are improved to advantage in this flat country, the face of which in a course of years has undergone important changes, from the habit of the people of leaving crumbling ruins to accumulate. Here the line of the principal street can be traced extending in a straight direction from the shore of the old harbour to the Gate of Resheed,* which is at the eastern extremity of the enclosure; and the direction of the other great street, which crossed the former at right angles, is observable.

It must have been an extensive city, but it is impossible to mark its precise limits. Certainly its remains alone convey an idea of its having been a flourishing town, and considerably more important than the Arab city which succeeded it.

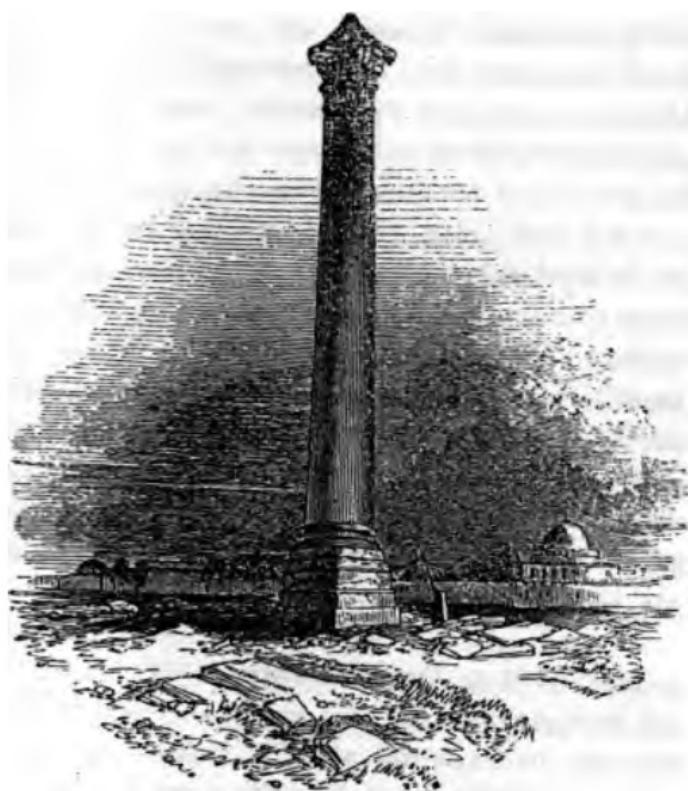
Desiring to see the Obelisks before the heat of the day, we set out early, and having passed the great square, we entered the field of ruins, and

* Resheed is the name of the town which the English call Rosetta.

found a number of peasants loitering among miserable huts, while a few children, in a state of nudity, and extremely unsightly in form, were standing or sitting in the entrances of their dwellings. I was grieved to see that the bodies of these poor little children were distended to a most unnatural size; while their limbs, which were very thin and small, appeared, from the contrast, to be sadly emaciated.

+ Among the mounds we observed the mouths of some of the ancient cisterns; each, with few exceptions, having the hollowed marble base of an ancient column placed over it. The cisterns seem to have extended under a great part of the ancient city; and there remain a sufficient number of them open and in good repair for the supply of the modern town. They have arched or vaulted roofs, which are supported by columns or by square pillars, and some of them have two or three ranges of pillars and arches, one above another, and are very extensive.

We saw little worthy of remark until we reached the Obelisks, which are situated at an angle of the enclosure, almost close to the shore of the new harbour; I mean those Obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles. Each is composed of a single block of red granite, nearly seventy feet in length, and seven feet and a half wide at the base. And here I wondered, as so many have done before me, that the ancient Egyptians contrived to raise such solid



Pompey's Pillar.

masses, and concluded ; that their knowledge of machinery, of which they have left such extraordinary proofs, must have been remarkable indeed.

Three lines of hieroglyphics adorn each of the four faces of either monument. My brother tells me that the central line bears the title and name of Thothmos the Third, who appears, from strong evidence, to have reigned shortly before the departure of the Israelites from Egypt : the lateral lines were sculptured at a later period ; for they bear the name of Rameses the Great, or Sesostris. The inscriptions near the base of the erect Obelisk seemed nearly obliterated, and the prostrate one is so encumbered with rubbish, that much of it is concealed. Pliny relates that Rameses erected four obelisks at Heliopolis : those of Alexandria are perhaps two of the four thus alluded to. Their antiquity being so much greater than that of Alexandria, suggests the probability of their having been taken from Heliopolis to adorn a temple or palace in the new city. The fact of the name of Rameses the Great being sculptured on them may have given rise to the tradition that they were *erected* by that king. An adjacent fort occupies the site of an old tower which belonged to the former wall (that is, to the *old* wall of the *Arab* city), and which was called by European travellers “the Tower of the Romans ;” as it was apparently

of Roman origin. Near this, standing on a mound of rubbish, we saw the shore of the new harbour, behind the wall on the left of the fort.

When the British army was in Alexandria in 1801, operations were commenced for transporting the fallen obelisk to England; but the commander-in-chief refusing to sanction the undertaking, it was abandoned, and nothing is said of its being resumed, although Mohainmed 'Alee offered the monument to us some years ago.

After viewing the Obelisks, we thankfully turned homewards, for the sun had risen, and the heat became intense.

Not far from the eastern gate (perhaps two miles and a half) is the field of the memorable battle of the 21st of March, 1801, in which Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who commanded our victorious army, received his mortal wound. At the spot where the battle raged most furiously, by the sea-shore, is a quadrangular enclosure, surrounded by substantial, but now ruined walls, constructed of calcareous stone and large bricks, in distinct layers, like many other Roman buildings. The ruin is called Kasr-el-Káyasireh (or the Pavilion, or Palace, of the Cæsars). It marks the site of a small town, which received the name of Nicopolis, in commemoration of a famous victory obtained there by Octavius Cæsar over Antony.

The Pillar called Pompey's is undoubtedly a

magnificent monument. The shaft of the column is a single block of red granite, sixty-eight feet in height, and nine feet in diameter at the bottom, according to my brother's measurement. The capital is a block of the same kind of stone, and is ten feet high. The base, plinth, and pedestal are likewise of red granite, and each is a single block. The combined length of these three pieces is seventeen feet. The total height of this superb monument is therefore ninety-five feet ; and the substructure, which is partly modern, is four feet in height. The shaft is beautifully wrought, but sadly disfigured by numerous names inscribed in very large characters, with black paint. They have mostly been written by persons who have ascended to the summit. This they have contrived by flying a large paper kite, and causing it to descend so that the cord rested on the top of the capital ; by these means, they succeeded in drawing a stout rope over it ; and having accomplished this (to use the naval term) they easily "rigged shrouds," by which to ascend. This exploit has been performed several times, generally by naval officers, who have caused the name of their ship to be painted on the shaft.

Among the adventurers, an English lady once ascended to the summit. There is a Greek inscription on the pedestal, but it can only be faintly seen when the rays of the sun fall obliquely upon

the surface of the stone. Every traveller who examined the Pillar since the time of Pococke believed the inscription to be entirely obliterated, until Colonel Squire again discovered it. That gentleman with Mr. Hamilton and Colonel Leake deciphered (with the exception of a few characters) the lines, four in number, which record the dedication, by a "Prefect of Egypt" (whose name is almost illegible), to the "most revered Emperor, the protecting divinity of Alexandria, Diocletian the Invincible." The name of the "Prefect" also has since been deciphered by Sir Gardner Wilkinson—it is Publius. This inscription certainly proves that the column, or the building in which it stood, was *dedicated* to the Roman emperor whose name is thus recorded, but not that the column was *erected* in honour of that individual, any more than the lateral lines on the Obelisks which I have described prove that they were erected in the reign of Sesostris.

I may here briefly give you the tradition respecting the burning of the Alexandrian library (deriving my information from my brother), which took place in the time of 'Omar, as it is connected with the history of the great pillar. 'Abd-el-Lateef and El-Makreezee affirm, that this pillar originally belonged to a magnificent building, containing a library, which 'Amr, the Arab general, burned by the command of 'Omar. A particular account

of the burning of this library is given by Abu-l Faraj; but the statement of that author has been disbelieved, because the story is related by few other writers; yet why should they record what they considered an event of scarcely any importance? It is evident from the slight manner in which 'Abd-el-Lateef and El-Makreezee mention the fact, that they regarded it as a very unimportant occurrence. They allude to it merely as connected with the history of the great Pillar. The former says, "Here was the library which 'Amr Ibn-el-'A's burned by permission of 'Omar." El-Makreezee says, "The Pillar is of a red speckled stone; hard and flinty. There were around it about four hundred columns which Karaja, Governor of Alexandria in the time of the Sultán Saláh-ed-Deen Yoosuf Ibn-Eiyoob (called by Europeans "Saladin"), broke, and threw them into the sea, near the shore, to prevent the vessels of an enemy from approaching the walls of the city. It is said (he adds) that this pillar is one of those which stood in the portico of Aristotle, who there taught philosophy; and that this academy contained a library, which 'Amr Ibn-el-'A's burned by direction of 'Omar." The Arab General 'Amr, having taken Alexandria, was solicited by one Johannes, surnamed "the Grammian," to spare the library above mentioned, and to suffer it to remain in the possession of its former owners. 'Amr, willing to

oblige the philosopher, wrote to his sovereign, desiring to know his pleasure respecting these books, and received the following answer:—"As to the books which you have mentioned, if they contain what is agreeable with the book of God, in the book of God is sufficient without them; and if they contain what is contrary to the book of God, there is no need of them; so give orders for their destruction." They were accordingly distributed about the city, to be used for heating the baths, and in the space of six months they were consumed." "Hear what happened," writes Abu-l-Faraj, "and wonder!" The author here quoted does *certainly* speak of this event as one of lamentable importance; but he was a *Christian* writer. The *Muslims*, though they love and encourage many branches of literature, generally imagine that the books of the Christians are useless, or of an evil tendency.

I must now leave Alexandria and its environs, saying a few words respecting the ancient Necropolis, or "City of the Dead," which I have *not* seen, being satisfied with my brother's account of it, and being anxious to proceed to Cairo.

The name of Necropolis has been given to a tract of nearly two miles in length, on the southwest of the site of the ancient city, between the old harbour and the bed of the Lake Mareotis. The sepulchres are all excavated in the rock, which is

calcareous, or rather soft. Those my brother saw were small and rudely cut, without painting or any other decorations. One of the catacombs is very spacious. It is the only one that is well worthy of being examined. The principal chamber is described as being of a circular form; and the roof is excavated like the interior of a dome. Around it are three recesses, which were doubtless receptacles for mummies; and around each of these are three troughs cut in the rock, designed to serve as sarcophagi. In other chambers are similar receptacles for the dead. The entrance of the principal, or circular, apartment being ornamented with pilasters and a pediment, it is evident that the period of the formation of the catacomb was posterior to the founding of Alexandria. Along the shore of the harbour are many other excavations, but of small dimensions, which are also sepulchres. Many of them, being partly below the level of the sea, are more or less filled with water; the part of the rock which intervened having crumbled away, and left the interior exposed to the waves. Some of these have been called "the baths of Cleopatra," though evidently sepulchres like the rest.

And now, if my account of Alexandria and its monuments has been too brief, I must plead as my apology, my anxiety to pursue our route; but I must add, that although the modern Alexandria is

the successor of one of the most illustrious cities of ancient times, it disappoints me, and occasions only melancholy reflections.

Truly history confers a deep interest on this spot, once the chief seat of Egyptian learning, the theatre of many wars and bloody tragedies, the scene of the martyrdom of St. Mark, the birth-place and residence of many of the most eminent fathers of the church, and the hot-bed of schisms and heresies. But it is only in retrospect we find that on which our minds can rest, and which can give rise to reflections which may be pursued to advantage.

LETTER III.

Cairo, July, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

To-DAY we have arrived with thankful hearts at Cairo, our voyages by sea and by river completed for a time.

On leaving Alexandria, we engaged an iron track-boat, used chiefly for the conveyance of travellers on their way to India from Alexandria, by the canal called the Mahmoodeeyeh, to the Nile. The boat was very large, containing two large cabins, the foremost of which was furnished with benches and tables, and apparently clean; and being drawn by four horses, passed so rapidly along, that we enjoyed, from the current of air, a feeling of freshness, which led us at nightfall into a grievous mistake; for we laid down, and expected rest without arranging our mosquito curtains. Those who had fitted up the boat had covered the wide benches with carpet. Imagine *such* a couch in *such* a latitude! we were positively covered by fleas, and swarmed by black beetles, and the latter of such a growth as are never seen in England. Too late we repented of our error, and I should

strongly recommend any person travelling in Egypt to sleep under mosquito curtains winter and summer. There is certainly a consciousness of heat and want of air, for perhaps a quarter of an hour after the curtain is closely tucked in, but what is that compared to the constant attacks of vermin of an extraordinary variety, to which the traveller in the East is subject? Our first night in the track-boat, without mosquito-curtains, will not be easily forgotten.*

On the following morning we arrived at the point where the canal enters the Nile, and found that the boat which we expected would be ready for our voyage to Cairo, had conveyed a party towards the scene of a festival, and might not return for some days. Here our situation was one of severe suffering. We were stationed between two high ridges, composed of mud thrown up in forming the bed of the canal, very dry of course, and exceedingly dusty, and covered with mud huts.

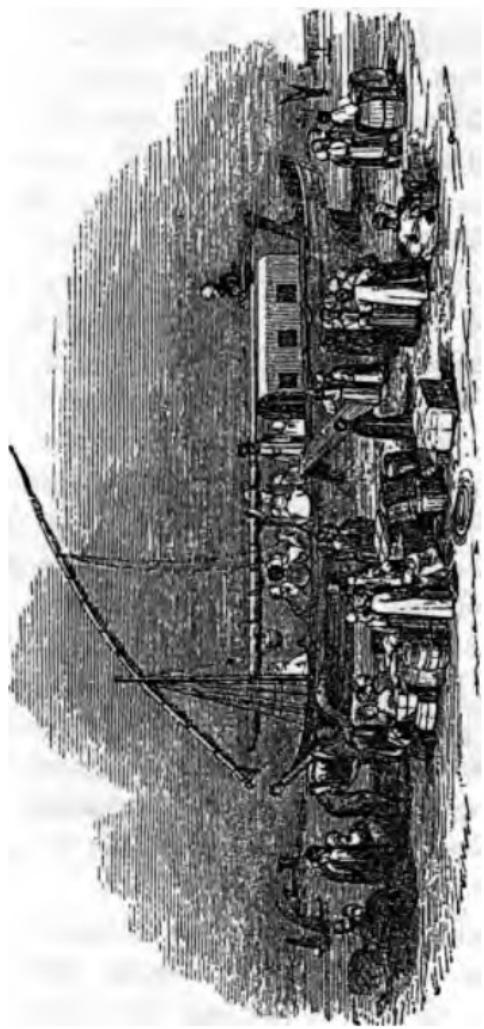
* Since I wrote the above, the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company have, I believe, undertaken the conveyance of travellers from Alexandria to Suez. Be this as it may, it is due to the Company to say, that our voyage from England to Egypt was rendered as pleasant as a splendid vessel, excellent attendance, and every desirable accommodation could make it; and the manner in which travellers are brought through Egypt, on their way to India, is now, I am told, as comfortable as any reasonable person could desire.

The intense heat, the clouds of dust, and the sinell of this place, where we were hemmed in by boats and barges for two days and nights, without being able to improve our situation (because it was necessary in order to be ready for the Nile-boat to continue near the entrance of the canal), was infinitely worse than sea-sickness, or anything else in the way of inconvenience we had hitherto experienced. Indeed the sea-sickness was welcome to me, for it confined me to my bed, and spared me the pain of seeing my own dear country, which holds so many and so much we love, fade from my sight. However long or however short may be the time proposed by any person for the purpose of visiting other countries, however pleasurable their expectations, however full of hope their prospects, there are regrets—there is a pang—on quitting *England*, which must be felt by the wayfarer, but can never be described, and is never fully anticipated. But I must not wander from my proper subject. Where the canal runs along the narrow neck of land between the salt marsh of Mareotis and that of Aboo-Keer, the sides are formed by solid masses of stone, to prevent in some degree the filtration of salt water into the Mahmoodeeyeh, as it supplies the cisterns of Alexandria. In scarcely any part does this canal occupy the bed of the *ancient* canal of Alexandria, which it crosses in several places. More than

three hundred thousand men were employed to dig it; and about twelve thousand of these are said to have died in the course of ten months; many of them in consequence of ill-treatment, excessive labour, and the want of wholesome nourishment and good water. Their only implements in this work were the hoes which are commonly used in Egyptian agriculture; and where the soil was moist they scraped it up with their hands, and then removed it in baskets. The whole length of the canal is nearly fifty British miles, and its breadth about eighty or ninety feet. It was commenced and completed in the year 1819. The name of Mahmoodeeyeh was given to it in honour of Mahmoud, the reigning sultán.

In two days our promised boat arrived, and we joyfully left the Mahmoodeeyeh, and its gloomy prospect, where the peasants appeared to be suffering from abject poverty, and where the mud huts, rising one above another, many of them being built in a circular form, bore the appearance by moonlight of the ruined towers of castles, with here and there a gleam of red light issuing from the apertures.

The communication between the canal and the Nile was closed, therefore we walked for a few minutes along the bank, and we rejoiced on entering our boat to feel the sweetest breeze imaginable, and to look upon the green banks (especially on



Nile Boat.

the Delta side) of one of the most famous rivers in the world.

The boats of the Nile are admirably constructed for the navigation of that river. Their great triangular sails are managed with extraordinary facility, which is an advantage of the utmost importance; for the sudden and frequent gusts of wind to which they are subject, require that a sail should be taken in almost in a moment, or the vessel would most probably be overset. On many occasions one side of our boat was completely under water, but the men are so skilful that an accident seldom happens, unless travellers pursue the voyage during the night.

We ordered that our boat should not proceed at night, therefore we were three days on the Nile.

A custom which is always observed by the Arab boat-men at the commencement of a voyage much pleased me. As soon as the wind had filled our large sail, the Reyyis (or captain of the boat) exclaimed "El-Fat-'hah." This is the title of the opening chapter of the Kur'-an (a short and simple prayer), which the Reyyis and all the crew repeated together in a low tone of voice. Would to Heaven that, in this respect, the example of the poor Muslim might be followed by our countrymen, that our entire dependence on the protecting providence of God might be universally acknowledged, and every journey, and every voyage, be sanctified by *prayer*.

On the first day we passed the town of Fooweh, where I could distinguish eleven mosques with their picturesque domes and minarets, and a few manufactories ; the dwellings are miserable, but when viewed from a little distance the whole has a pleasing appearance, for the minarets are white-washed, and the houses, for a town in Egypt, *have been* good. Numbers of women and girls belonging to this town were filling their pitchers on the bank as we passed ; while others were washing clothes ; which done, each proceeded to wash her hands, face, and feet, and immediately returned with her pitcher or bundle on her head. A piece of rag rolled in the form of a ring, and placed upon the head, served to secure the pitcher in its erect position ; and I constantly saw, during our stay on the Mahmoodeeyeh, large and heavy pitchers carried by the women on their heads, without a hand upraised to keep them steady.

Fooweh, like Matoobis, is celebrated for the beauty of its women ; but as our boat kept in the middle of the stream, I had no opportunity of pronouncing on their personal attractions. The lower orders are mostly, I think, remarkably plain. Their usual dress (and indeed frequently, their only article of clothing, except the head veil) is a plain blue shirt, differing little from that of the men, which is also commonly blue. It is a general custom of the Egyptian women of this class to *tattoo some parts of their persons*, particularly the

front of the chin and the lips, with blue marks; and like the women of the higher classes, many of them tinge their nails with the dull red dye of the henna, and arrange their hair in a number of small plaits which hang down the back.

I must not omit telling you that Fooweh is also famous for its pomegranates, which are both plentiful and excellent in flavour.

We reached the village of Shubra Kheet shortly after sunset, and as our boatmen recommended that our boat should be made fast under this place, we remained there until the morning. It was then curious to see the various occupations of the peasants, and to observe the lassitude with which they labour. During our voyage several poor fellows floated towards the boat, sitting as it were upright on the water, paddling with their feet, and bearing each three water-melons, one in each hand, and one on their heads. Their manner of swimming is extraordinary—they seem perfectly at their ease.

On the second day we passed renowned Sais, and afterwards had a glimpse of the great desert, and its almost immeasurable sea of sand. Sais was the ancient capital of the Delta, one of the most celebrated cities of Egypt, and the reputed birth-place of Cecrops, who, it is said, led a colony of Saites to Attica, about 1556 years before the Christian era, founded Athens, and established there the worship of Minerva (the Egyptian *Neith*), the tutelar goddess of his native city.

This place is so choked up with rubbish that its ruins are scarcely worth visiting; but the labour of excavation would probably be rewarded by interesting discoveries. The modern name of the place is "Sá-el-Hagar," that is, "Sais of the Stone," probably allusive to the great monolithic chapel described by Herodotus as the most remarkable of the monuments here existing in his time. The remains of Sais, viewed from the river, appear merely like lofty and extensive mounds. They chiefly consist of a vast enclosure, about half a mile in length, and nearly the same in breadth. This is formed by walls of prodigious dimensions, being about fifty feet thick, and, in several parts, considerably more than that in height, constructed of large crude bricks, fifteen or sixteen inches in length, eight in breadth, and seven in thickness. The rains, though very rare even in this part of Egypt, have so much decayed these walls, that from a little distance they are hardly to be distinguished from the rubbish in which they are partly buried. Within the enclosure are only seen some enormous blocks of stone, and the remains of some buildings of unburnt brick, which appear to have been tombs, and several catacombs, which have been explored and ransacked. The enclosure contained the famous temple of the Egyptian Minerva, described by Herodotus, the portico of which surpassed in its colossal dimensions all other works of a similar nature, and was adorned with

gigantic figures and enormous androsphinxes. Before it was the famous monolithic chapel I have mentioned, which was twenty-one cubits long, fourteen wide, and eight high. It is related by Herodotus that two thousand boatmen were employed during the space of three years in transporting this monolith down the Nile from Elephantine. There was also, before the temple, a colossus, in a reclining posture (or, more probably, a *sitting* posture), seventy-five feet in length, similar to that before the temple of Vulcan at Memphis, which latter colossus was the gift of Amasis. Behind the temple was a sepulchre, but for whom it was destined the historian declines mentioning. Lofty obelisks were likewise raised within the sacred enclosure, near a circular lake, which was lined with stone. This lake served as a kind of theatre for nocturnal exhibitions of solemn mysteries relating to the history of the unnamed person above alluded to, who was, probably, Osiris; for, from feelings of religious awe, many of the Egyptians abstained from mentioning the name of that god. Many other towns in Egypt disputed the honour of being regarded as the burial-place of Osiris. All the Pharaohs born in the Saitic district were buried within the enclosure which surrounded the sacred edifices of Sais; and one of those kings, Apries, founded here a magnificent palace. Of the grand religious festivals which were periodically celebrated in *Egypt in ancient times*, the third, in point of

magnificence, was that of Sais, in honour of Neith; the most splendid being that of Bubastis, and the next, that of Busiris, both in Lower Egypt. That of Sais was called "the festival of burning lamps," because, on the occasion of its celebration, the houses in that city, and throughout all Egypt, were illuminated by lamps hung around them.

I mentioned that the boat we had been promised at the Mahmoodieyeh had conveyed a party towards the scene of a festival; and you may be surprised to hear that the manners of the modern Egyptians are not wholly different from those of the ancient Alexandrians, who flocked to the licentious festivals celebrated at Canopus in honour of the god Sérapis. Innumerable boats covered the canal by night as well as by day, conveying pilgrims of both sexes, dancing, singing, and drinking, and availing themselves in every way of the religious licence afforded them. So, in the present day, vast numbers of the male inhabitants of the metropolis of Egypt, and persons from other parts, with numerous courtesans, repair to the festivals celebrated in commemoration of the birth of the seyyid * Ahmad El-Bedawee (a celebrated Muslim saint), at Tanta, in the Delta, where swarms of dancing-girls and singers contribute to their amusement, and where, I am told, brandy is drunk almost as freely as coffee.

* *Seyyid* is a title given to the descendants of the Prophet.

We passed, to-day, by the village of Kafra-ex-Zeiyát, which exhibited a busy scene: numerous visitors of the seyyid landing there, on their way to Tanta, and others embarking to return to their homes.

We arrived late at the village of Nadir, under which we remained for the night. In the morning we found ourselves surrounded by fine buffaloes standing in the water. Their milk is chiefly used, and the butter made from it is very white and sweet. We often saw numbers of these animals standing or lying in the water, for the Nile is in many parts extremely shallow, and abounds with moving sandbanks. Hence the boats frequently run aground, but they are generally pushed off without much difficulty by means of poles, or the crew descend into the water and shove the vessel off with their backs and shoulders. In a calm, the boat is towed by the crew; and in several cases during our voyage, the whole boat's crew, consisting of ten men, were thus drawing it, while no one remained with us but the Reyyis. It was astonishing to see how well they performed this laborious task, in the heat of July; very seldom stopping to take rest, and then only for a short time. The boatmen generally sing while the vessel is under sail, and they often accompany their songs with the rude music of the darebukkeh and zummárah, which are a funnel-shaped earthen drum and a

double reed-pipe. There is something very agreeable in the songs of the boatmen, although the airs they sing are most strange. There is so much of contentment in the tones of their voices that it does one good to hear them.

The most common kind of passage-boat, or pleasure-boat, is called a kangeh, also pronounced kanjeh. It is long and narrow, and does not draw much water. It has two masts, with two large triangular sails, and a low cabin, which is generally divided into two or more apartments, having small square windows, which are furnished with blinds, or glasses, and sliding shutters in the inside. In our boat we were exceedingly worried by beetles, bugs, and fleas; and these seriously annoyed me on account of my poor children, whose rest was sadly disturbed, and their very patience and cheerfulness increased our sympathy. Indeed, these young wayfarers made us cast many a longing wish for their sakes towards the comforts of a home.

During the nights our mosquito curtains diminished but did not remove the inconvenience; but they are invaluable, as they prevent all attacks from large reptiles, although bugs and fleas are proof against all precaution.

The boats belonging to the Turkish grandees are very gay: bunches of flowers are commonly painted on the panels of the cabin, both within and without; and the blood-red flag, with its white crescent

and star or stars, waves at the stern. Other boats are more simple in their decorations, and all extremely picturesque.

On this day of our voyage, we passed little worthy of remark, excepting, indeed, the groups of noble and graceful palm trees, which form a characteristic and beautiful feature in every Egyptian landscape. The villages presented a curious effect, from almost every hut being crowned with a conical pigeon-house, constructed of earthen pots. With these cones, frequently as large as the huts themselves, almost every village hereabouts abounds.

We observed many carcasses of cattle floating upon the water, or lying by the banks of the river, for Egypt is at present visited by a severe murrain.*

During our voyage we saw several instances of mirage (called by the Arabs *seráb*) ; but the apparent clearness of the mock water destroyed the illusion ; for the Nile, generally turbid, was then particularly so ; and it was impossible to strain the imagination so far as to conceive that a *clear* lake should exist near the banks of the river. Yet it was an interesting and curious phenomenon, and indeed rendered painfully interesting by the

* This murrain lasted more than three months, and reminded us of that in the time of Moses.

knowledge, that many a perishing wanderer in the desert had bitterly tasted the disappointment its mimicry occasions.

+ I can say little of the beauty of the banks of the Nile. They are in many places sufficiently high to obstruct the view, and broken and perpendicular. The Delta side certainly often presented to the eye a sloping bank of refreshing green, but with scarcely any diversity. I am not disposed to underrate the prospect; but you have doubtless heard that the borders of the Nile are seen in all their beauty about a month after the decrease of the river, which has left its fertilizing soil for a considerable space on either side, when its banks seem covered with a carpet of the brightest emerald green, and its little islands are crowned with the most brilliant verdure.

Our voyage was made during its increase; and when, on the third night, our boat was made fast to a sandy island, no village being in the neighbourhood under which the Reyyis thought we could safely pass the night, we all congratulated ourselves and each other that our boating was nearly at an end.

Early on the following morning we descried the venerable Pyramids, but the undulations of the heated atmosphere on the surface of the intermediate plain prevented their being distinctly visible. They were three leagues distant.





A Turkish Lady in the Riding-Attire of Egypt.

We shortly after arrived at Boulak, the principal port of Cairo; and with our arrival came the necessity that I and my sister-in-law should equip ourselves in Eastern costume. There was no small difficulty in this ceremony, and when completed, it was stifling to a degree not to be forgotten. Imagine the face covered closely by a muslin veil, double at the upper part, the eyes only uncovered, and over a dress of coloured silk an overwhelming covering of black silk, extending, in my idea, in every direction ; so that, having nothing free but my eyes, I looked with dismay at the high bank I must climb, and the donkey I must mount, which was waiting for me at the summit.. Nothing can be more awkward and uncomfortable than this riding dress ; and if I had any chance of attaining my object without assuming it, I should never adopt it ; but in English costume I should not gain admittance into many hareems : besides, the knowledge that a Muslim believes a curse to rest on the "seer and the seen," makes one anxious not to expose passers-by to what they would deem a misfortune, or ourselves to their malediction.

My brother, in his 'Modern Egyptians,' has represented the manner in which the hábarah is worn by the native ladies of Egypt. The Turkish ladies close it in front, esteeming it improper to show the colour of the sebleh or tób beneath.

The house dress is well suited to the climate and extremely picturesque, but the walking dress is grotesque and curious.

With a short account of our ride of nearly two miles from Boulak to Cairo, I shall conclude.

All mounted, and preceded by a janissary, we looked in wonder, as we rode through Boulak, at the dilapidated state of this suburb. There are, indeed, good houses there, I am assured, but we had not the good fortune to see them, and we emerged gladly from its narrow streets to an open space, where soon, however, the dust (which rose in clouds from the tread of our easy-paced donkeys) so annoyed us, that for the first time I felt it desirable that nothing but the eyes should be uncovered. At length we fairly entered Cairo, and my astonishment increased tenfold.

I wrote to you that the streets of Alexandria are narrow; they are *wide* when compared with those of Cairo. The meshreebeeyehs, or projecting windows, facing each other, above the ground-floors, literally touch in *some* instances; and in *many*, the opposite windows are within reach.

The first impression received on entering this celebrated city, is, that it has the appearance of having been deserted for perhaps a century, and suddenly repeopled by persons who had been unable, from poverty or some other cause, to repair

it, and clear away its antiquated cobwebs. I never saw such cobwebs as hung in many apertures, in gloomy dark festoons, leading me to consider the unmolested condition of their tenants. I wish I could say that I do not fear these creatures ; but surely in the insect world there is nothing so savage-looking as a black thick-legged spider.

After passing through several of the streets, into which it appeared as though the dwellings had turned out nearly all their inhabitants, we arrived at an agreeable house situated in the midst of gardens, in which we are to take up our temporary abode. Graceful palm-trees, loaded with their fruit, meet our eyes in every direction, while acacias, bananas, orange and lemon trees, pomegranate trees, and vines, form a splendid variety, and but for one essential drawback, the coup d'œil would be charming. This drawback is the want of refreshing showers. The foliage on which we look is perfectly covered with dust, and the soil of the gardens is watered by a wheel worked by a patient bullock who pursues his round-about with little intermission, and thrives in his persevering labour.

The plan of the gardens is very curious ; they are divided by long parallel walks, with gutters on either side, and subdivided into little square compartments, each about two yards wide, by ridges of earth about half a foot high, and the water is admitted into these squares, one after

another. When I looked upon the little ditches and squares of water, remaining for some time without absorption, I could not but remember our bright pretty gardens in England, and how carefully in watering our flowers we avoided saturating the mould, both because it would be injurious to them, and displeasing to the eye—and these recollections almost brought me to the conclusion that a garden in Egypt is not worth the trouble of cultivation—so much for national prejudice and love of home scenes. Adieu!



Pyramid and Sphinx.

LETTER IV.

Cairo, August, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ALTHOUGH prepared by the motley groups at Malta, and the changing scene and variety of costume at Alexandria, for much that is more astonishing to the European in Cairo, I find the peculiarities of this place and people are beyond my most extravagant expectations. The Shubra road passes very near our windows, and I am constantly attracted by the various processions which wind their way to and from this city.

The wedding processions, in which the poor bride walks under a canopy of silk, not only veiled, but enveloped in a large shawl, between two other females, amuse me much ; while the tribe before the "destined one," occasionally demonstrate their joy by executing many possible, and, to our ideas, many impossible feats, and the rear is brought up by the contributions of children from many of the houses *en route*. The bride must, indeed, be nearly suffocated long before she reaches her destination, for she has to walk, frequently almost fainting, under a mid-day sun, sometimes a long dis-

tance, while a few musicians make what is considered melody with drums and shrill hautboys, and attending females scream their *zaghâreet* (or quavering cries of joy), in deafening discord in her train.

The funeral processions distress me. The corpse of a man is carried in an open bier, with merely a shawl thrown over the body, through which the form is painfully visible. The body of a woman is carried in a covered bier over which a shawl is laid ; and an upright piece of wood, covered also with a shawl and decorated with ornaments belonging to the female head-dress, rises from the fore-part. The corpses of children are borne on this latter kind of bier.

One sound that I heard as a funeral procession approached, I can never forget ; it was a cry of such deep sorrow—a sob of such heartfelt distress, that it was clearly distinguished from the wail of the hired women who joined the funeral chorus. We were immediately drawn to the windows, and saw a man leading a procession of women, and bearing in his arms a little dead infant, wrapt merely in a shawl, and travelling to its last earthly home. The cry of agony proceeded, I conclude, from its mother, and could only be wrung from a nearly bursting heart. Contend against me who may, I must ever maintain my opinion, that no love is so deep, no attachment so strong, as that of mother to child, and of child to mother.

The funerals that pass are very numerous ; but other spectacles that I see from my windows afford various and endless entertainment, and make me long to look into the houses of this most curious city, as well as into the streets and roads. After much consideration, however, I have determined to defer my intended visits to the hareems of the great, until I shall have acquired some little knowledge of Arabic ; for although Turkish is the language usually spoken in those hareems, Arabic is generally understood by the inmates, and as the latter is the common language of Egypt, some knowledge of it is indispensable to me.

But our first object has been to find a comfortable dwelling ; and notwithstanding the kind assistance of numerous friends, my brother has experienced great difficulty in attaining this object. The friendly attention that has been shown to us all is most highly gratifying ; and I have already had some experience of the manners and usages of the hareem ; two Syrian ladies having devoted themselves in the most amiable manner to render us every possible service.

After having searched for a house here during a month in vain, we were delighted by the offer of an exceedingly good one, which appeared in almost every respect eligible, and in which we are now residing. But our domestic comfort in this new abode has been disturbed by a singular trouble.

which has obliged us to arrange as soon as possible for a removal. The house is an admirable one, being nearly new, though on the old construction; therefore I shall endeavour to give you an idea of the better houses of Cairo by describing this, and some knowledge of the plan of its interior will enable you more fully to understand the annoyance to which we are subjected.

On the ground-floor is a court, open to the sky, round which the apartments extend, gallery above gallery. Round the court are five rooms; one large room (a mandarah) intended for the reception of male guests, with a fountain in the centre; a winter room; a small sleeping-room, for any male guest; a kitchen; and a coffee-room, for servants. On the right hand, immediately on entering the street-door, is the door of the hareem, or the entrance to the stairs leading to the ladies' apartments; the whole of the house, excepting the apartments of the ground-floor, being considered as the "hareem." On the first floor is a marble-paved chamber, with a roof open towards the north, and sloping upwards, conveying into the chamber generally a delightful breeze. There are also five other rooms on the first floor; and in each of the two principal apartments, the greater portion of the floor, forming about three-fourths, is raised from five to six inches, the depressed portion being paved with marble. The reason for thus

Laying the floors is, that the outer slippers are left on the depressed portion, and the raised part, which is matted, is not to be defiled with anything which is unclean. The feet are covered, in addition to the stockings, with a kind of inner slippers, the soles of which, as well as the upper leathers, are of yellow morocco : they are called mezz ; and the outer slippers, which are without heels, are styled báboog. The latter, by the way, I am often losing, and I fear I shall continue to do so, for I despair of learning to shuffle, like the ladies of the country. When wearing the riding or walking dress, the mezz are exchanged for a pair of high morocco socks, and the báboog are worn as usual. They are always pale yellow. The walls throughout are whitewashed, and the ceilings composed of fancifully carved woodwork, in some instances extremely tastefully arranged. Besides the rooms I have mentioned, there are three small marble-paved apartments, forming, *en suite*, an antechamber, a reclining chamber, and a bath. We little thought, when we congratulated ourselves on this luxury, that it would become the most abominable part of the house. Above are four rooms, the principal one opening to a delightful terrace, which is considerably above most of the surrounding houses ; and on this we enjoy our breakfast and supper under the clearest sky in the world ; but we always remember that the sweet air which com-

forts us in the mornings and evenings of our sultry days, blows from the direction of our own dear country ; and the thought renders it the more welcome.

We were much surprised, after passing a few days here, to find that our servants were unable to procure any rest during the night ; being disturbed by a constant knocking, and by the appearances of what they believed to be an 'Efreet, that is, "an evil spirit," but the term 'Efreet is often used to signify "a ghost." The manner of the servants' complaint of the latter was very characteristic. Having been much annoyed one morning by a noisy quarrel under our windows, my brother called one of our servants to ascertain how it had arisen, when he replied, " It is a matter of no importance, O Efendee, but the subject which perplexes us is that there is a devil in the bath." My brother being aware of their superstitious prejudices, replied, " Well, is there a bath in the world that you do not believe to be a resort of evil spirits, according to the well-known tradition on that subject?" " True, O my master," rejoined the man, " the case is so ; this devil has long been the resident of the house, and he will never permit any other tenant to retain its quiet possession ; for a long time no one has remained more than a month within these walls, excepting the last person who lived here, and he, though he had

soldiers and slaves, could not stay longer than about nine months ; for the devil disturbed his family all night." I must here tell you that during our short stay in the house, two maids had left us, one after another, without giving us any idea of their intentions, and had never returned, and the cause of their sudden disappearance was now explained by the men, their fellow-servants. Certainly our own rest had been grievously disturbed ; but we had attributed all the annoyance to a neighbour's extraordinary demonstrations of joy on the subject of his own marriage, and whose festivities were perhaps the more extravagant because he is an old man, and his bride a young girl : but as I hope to give you a particular account, on a future occasion, of the manner in which the people of this country celebrate a marriage, suffice it to say at present, the noise was deafening during the *whole* of eight nights, and that, when we were becoming accustomed to the constant din, we were roused by three tremendous reports of fire-arms, which rung through the apartments of our own and the neighbouring houses, and shook our dwelling to the very foundation. It is therefore not remarkable that we did not hear the noises which disturbed our poor servants, in addition to the sufficient uproar without.

It appeared, on inquiry, that the man to whom this house formerly belonged, and who is now

dead, 'hall, during his residence in it, murdered a poor tradesman who entered the court with his merchandise, and two slaves: one of these (a black girl) was destroyed in the bath, and you will easily understand how far *such* a story as this, and a *true* one too, sheds its influence on the minds of a people who are superstitious to a proverb. We can only regret that my brother engaged the house in ignorance of these circumstances; had he known them, he would also have been aware that the prejudice among the lower orders would be insurmountable, and that no female servant would remain with us. The sudden disappearance of our maids was thus quaintly explained by our door-keeper. "Why did A'mineh and Zeyneb leave you? Verily, O my master, because they feared for their security. When A'mineh saw the Efreet she said at once, 'I must quit this house; for if he touch me, I shall be deranged, and unfit for service;' and truly," he added, "this would have been the case. For ourselves, as men, we fear not; but we fear for the hareem. Surely you will consider their situation, and quit this house." This (he thought) was putting the matter in the strongest light. "Try a few nights longer," my brother said, "and call me as soon as the Efreet appears to-night; we might have caught him last night, when you say he was so near you, and after giving him a sound beating, you would not have found

your rest, disturbed." At this remark, it was evident that the respect of both servants for their master had received a temporary shock. "O Efendee," exclaimed one of them, "this is an 'Efreet, and not a son of Adam, as you seem to suppose. He assumed last night all imaginary shapes, and when I raised my hand to seize him, he became a piece of cord, or any other trifle." Now these men are valuable servants, and we should be sorry to lose them, especially in our present predicament; therefore my brother merely answered, that if the annoyance did not cease, he would make inquiry respecting another house. But to obtain a house, excepting in the heart of the city, is no easy matter; and on account of my children, we feel it to be indispensable for the preservation of their health that we should reside on the west side of the city, and close to the outskirts, where the air is pure and salubrious, and where Ibraheem Pasha has caused the mounds of rubbish to be removed, and succeeded by extensive plantations of olive, palm, cypress, acacia, and other trees. These plantations are open to the public, and form a charming place of resort for children.

I have not mentioned to you that the inhuman wretch to whom this house belonged bequeathed it to a mosque, perhaps as an expiation for his crimes, but left it, for the term of her life, to the person who is our present landlady; and now a circum-

stance was explained to our minds which we had not before fully understood. On the day before we desired to remove here, we sent one of our servants to hire some women, and to superintend the clearing of the house ; and on his arrival there, the landlady (whose name is Lálah-Zár, or bed of tulips) refused him admission, saying, “ Return to the Efendee, and say to him that I am baking cakes in the oven of his kitchen, that I may give them away *to-morrow* at the tomb of the late owner of the house, to the poor and needy. This is a meritorious act for your master’s sake, as well as for my own, and your master will understand it.”

Poor woman ! it is now evident to us that she hoped by this act of propitiation to prevent further annoyance to her tenants, and consequent loss to herself.

The morning after the conversation I have related took place, the servants’ report was considerably improved. They had passed, they said, a comfortable night, and we hoped we might arrange to remain here, but the following day a most singular statement awaited us. The door-keeper, in a tone of considerable alarm, said that he had been unable to sleep at all ; that the ’Efreet had walked round the gallery all night in *clogs* !*

* Clogs are always worn in the bath.

and had repeatedly knocked at his door with a brick, or some other hard substance. Then followed the question why one of the men had not called my brother, evidently because neither of them dared pass the gallery round which the supposed 'Efreet was taking his midnight walk, striking each door violently as he passed it. For many nights these noises continued, and many evenings they began before we retired to rest, and as we could never find the offender, I sadly feared for my children; not for their personal safety, but lest they should incline to superstition, and nothing impoverishes the mind so much as such a tendency.

Another singular circumstance attending this most provoking annoyance was our finding, on several successive mornings, five or six pieces of charcoal laid at the door leading to the chambers in which we sleep; conveying in this country a wish, or rather an imprecation, which is far from agreeable; viz. "May your faces be blackened." However, under all these circumstances, I rejoiced to find my children increasingly amused by these pranks, and established in the belief that one or more wicked persons liked the house so well, that they resolved to gain possession, and to eject by dint of sundry noises, and other annoyances, any persons who desire its occupation. It is, however, a more serious matter to poor Lálah-Zár than to us;

for it is very certain that the legacy of the late possessor will never prove a great benefit either to her or to the mosque. You will be surprised when I tell you that the rent of such a house as this does not exceed £12 per annum. It is a very superior house, and infinitely beyond the usual run of houses, therefore always styled by the people of the country, the house of an Emeer (a Nobleman).

One thing we much regretted, that A'mineh (whom I mentioned early in this letter) had taken fright. She was the best of our maids; and her gentle respectful manners, and the perfect propriety of her demeanour, made her a very desirable attendant. I am sorry to say we have met with no other, but those who have proved themselves in every respect inefficient. The men-servants are excellent, and become attached to their masters almost invariably, when treated as they deserve; but as to the maids, I scarcely know how to describe them. I really do not think they hardly ever wash themselves, excepting when they go to the bath, which is once in about ten days or a fortnight. On these occasions a complete scouring takes place (I can find no other term for the operation of the bath), and their long hair is arranged in many small plaits: from that time until the next visit to the bath, their hair is never unplaited. I speak from having watched with dismay all we have had,

excepting A'mineh, who was a jewel among them, and from the information of all our friends in this country. These maids are extremely deceitful, and when directed with regard to their work, will answer with the most abject submission, although really disheartened by the most ordinary occupation. They sleep in their clothes, after the manner of the country, and the habit of doing so, coupled with the neglect of proper washing, involving a want of that freshness produced by a complete change of clothes, is especially objectionable. Were they strict in their religious observances, their cleanliness would be secured, as frequent ablutions are ordered in their code of law; but the lower orders of the women have seldom any religion at all.

Believe me, you are fortunate in England, in this respect, as well as many others, and I hope you will prize our English maids, if you have not done so already.

LETTER V.

September, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THAT you may be better prepared for future letters, you wish me to give you a general physical sketch of this most singular country, which is distinguished by its natural characteristics, as well as by its monuments of antiquity, from every other region of the globe. As my own experience will not enable me to do so, my brother has promised to furnish me with the necessary information.

The country (as well as the metropolis) is called *Masr*, by its modern inhabitants. It is generally divided into Upper and Lower. Upper Egypt, or the *Sa'eed*, may be described as a long winding valley, containing a soil of amazing fertility, bounded throughout its whole length by mountainous and sandy wastes.

Lower Egypt is an extensive plain, for the most part cultivated, and copiously supplied with moisture by the divided streams of the Nile, and by numerous canals. All the cultivable soil of Egypt owes its existence to the Nile, by which it is still annually augmented: for this river, when swollen

by the summer rains which regularly drench the countries between the northern limits of the Sennár and the equinoctial line, is impregnated with rich earth washed down from the mountains of Abyssinia and the neighbouring regions; and in its course through Nubia and Egypt, where rain is a rare phenomenon, it deposits a copious sediment, both in the channel in which it constantly flows, and upon the tracts which it annually inundates. It is every where bordered by cultivated fields, excepting in a few places, where it is closely hemmed in by the mountains, or the drifted sand of the desert. The mud of the Nile, analyzed by Regnault, was found to consist of 11 parts in 100 of water: 48 of alumine; 18 of carbonate of lime; 9 of carbon; 6 of oxide of iron; 4 of silex; and 4 of carbonate of magnesia.

The Nile is called in Egypt "El-Bahr" (or "the river"); for bahr signifies a "great river," as well as the sea. It is also called "Bahr en Neel" (or "the river Nile"), and "Neel Masr" (or "the Nile of Egypt"). The Arabs, generally, believe the "Neel Masr" to be a continuation of the "Neel es-Soodán" (or "Nile of the Negroes").

Of the two great branches, called "El-Bahr el-Azrak" (or "the blue river"), and "El-Bahr el-Abyad" (or "the white river"), which, uniting, form the Nile of Nubia and Egypt, the former (though less long than the other) is that to which

Egypt principally owes its fertility. Its chief characteristics (its colour; the banks between which it flows, &c.) are similar to those of the Nile of Egypt. Its dark colour, arising from its being impregnated with soil during the greater part of the year, has caused it to receive the name of "the blue river," while the other branch, from the opposite colour of its waters, is called "the white river." The latter is considerably wider than the former; its banks are sloping lawns, richly wooded, and very unlike the steep and broken banks of the Nile of Egypt.

At its entrance into the valley of Egypt, the Nile is obstructed by innumerable rocks of granite, which cause a succession of cataracts, or rather rapids. The mountains on the east of the river, as well as the islands in it, are here of granite: those on the western side are of sandstone. From this point, to the distance of thirty leagues southward, sandstone mountains of small altitude extend on each side of the river. The valley, so far, is very narrow, particularly throughout the upper half of the sandstone district; and there is but very little cultivable land on the banks of the river in that part; in some places the mountains are close to the stream; and in others, only a narrow sandy strip intervenes. At the distance of twelve leagues below the cataracts, the river is contracted to little more than half its usual width, by the mountains.

on each side. Here are extensive quarries, from which were taken the materials for the construction of many of the temples in the Thebais. This part is called "Gebel es-Silsileh," or "the Mountain of the Chain." Where the calcareous district begins, are two insulated hills (El-Gebeleyn) on the west of the Nile; one of them close to the river, and the other at a little distance behind the former. The valley then becomes wider, and more irregular in its direction; and the Nile winds through the middle of the cultivable land, or nearly so. Afterwards the valley assumes a less serpentine form, and the river flows along the eastern side; in many places washing the sides of the precipitous mountains. The calcareous district continues to the end of the valley, where the mountains on both sides diverge; the Arabian chain running due east to Suez, and the western hills extending in a north-west direction, towards the Mediterranean. Near the termination of the valley is an opening in the low western mountains, through which a canal conveys the waters of the Nile into the fertile province of El-Feiyoum. On the north-west of this province is a great lake, which receives the superfluous waters during the inundation. The length of the valley of Egypt, from the cataracts to the metropolis, is about 450 geographical miles. The distance by the river is above 500 miles from the cataracts to the metropolis, and about 400 miles

from Thebes to the same point. The difference in latitude between the cataracts and the metropolis is six degrees, or 360 geographical miles; and the distance from the latter point to the sea, in a straight line, is rather more than ninety miles. The width of the valley is in few parts more than eight or ten miles; and generally less than that. The width of that part of Lower Egypt which constituted the ancient Delta, is about 120 miles from east to west.

The whole of the fertile country is very flat; but the lands in the vicinity of the river are rather higher than those which are more remote. This has been supposed to result from a greater deposit of mud upon the former; which, however, cannot be the case, for it is observed that the fields near the river are generally above the reach of the inundation, while those towards the mountains are abundantly overflowed; but while the latter yield but one crop, the former are cultivated throughout the whole year; and it is the constant cultivation and frequent watering (which is done by artificial means) that so considerably raise the soil; not so much by the deposit of mud left by the water, as by the accumulation of stubble and manure. The cultivable soil throughout Egypt is free from stones, excepting in parts immediately adjacent to the desert. It almost everywhere abounds with *nitre*.

Between the cultivable land and the mountains, there generally intervenes a desert space, too high to be inundated. This tract partly consists of sand and pebbles, covering a bed of rock, and partly of drifted sand which has encroached on the cultivable soil. In some places, this desert space is two or three miles in width.

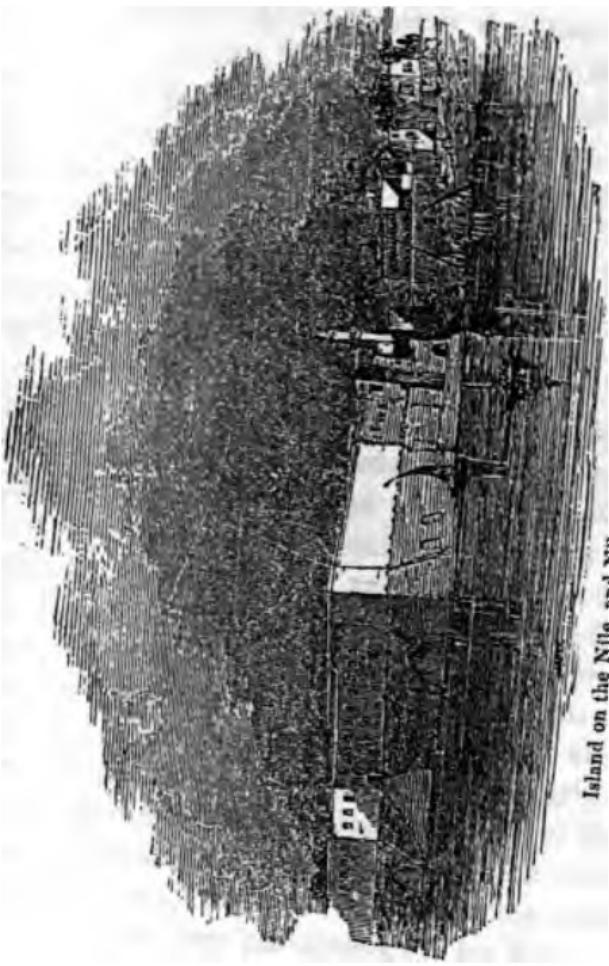
The extent of the cultivated land in Egypt, my brother calculates to be equal to rather more than one square degree and a half: in other words 5,500 square geographical miles.* This is less than half the extent of the land which is comprised within the confines of the desert; for many parts within the limits of the cultivable land are too high to be inundated, and consequently are not cultivated; and other parts, particularly in Lower Egypt, are occupied by lakes, or marshes, or drifted sand. Allowance also must be made for the space which is occupied by towns and villages, the river, canals, &c. Lower Egypt comprises about the

* He made this calculation from a list of all the towns and villages in Egypt, and the extent of cultivated land belonging to each. This list is appended to De Sacy's "Abd Al-latif." It was made in the year of the Flight 777 (A.D. 1375-6); and may be rather underrated than the reverse. The estimate of M. Mengin shows that in 1821 the extent of the cultivated land was much less; but since that period, considerable tracts of waste land have been rendered fertile.

same extent of cultivated land as the whole of Upper Egypt.*

The annual inundation irrigates the land sufficiently for one crop; but not without any labour of the fellah (or agriculturist): for care must be taken to detain the water by means of dams, or it would subside too soon. The highest rise of the Nile ever known would scarcely be sufficient if the waters were allowed to drain off the fields when the river itself falls. A very high rise of the Nile is, indeed, an event not less calamitous than a very scanty rise; for it overflows vast tracts of land which cannot be drained, it washes down many of the mud-built villages, the huts of which are composed of unburnt bricks, and occasions an awful loss of lives as well as property. Moreover the plague seldom visits Egypt excepting after a very high rise of the Nile. It is, however, far from being an *invariable* consequence of such an event. When the river begins to rise, all the canals are cleared out, each is closed by a dam of earth at the entrance, and opened when the Nile has nearly attained its greatest height, towards the end of September. When the river begins to fall the canals are closed again, that they may retain the water. The lands that are not inundated by the over-

* The term "sharakee" is applied to those lands which are above the reach of the inundation, and the term "rei" to the rest.



Island on the Nile, and Nilometer (Nile-Measurer), near Cairo.

flowing of the Nile are irrigated artificially, if sufficiently near to the river, or to a canal.

As all the cultivable soil of Egypt has been deposited by the river, it might be expected that the land would at length rise so high as to be above the reach of the inundation ; but the bed of the river rises at the same time, and in the same degree.

At Thebes, the Nile rises about thirty-six feet ; at the cataracts about forty ; at Rosetta, owing to the proximity of the mouth, it only rises to the height of about three feet and a half. The Nile begins to rise in the end of June, or the beginning of July ; that is to say, about, or soon after, the summer solstice, and attains its greatest height in the end of September, or sometimes (but rarely) in the beginning of October ; that is, in other words, about or soon after the autumnal equinox. During the first three months of its decrease, it loses about half the height it had attained ; and during the remaining six months, it falls more and more slowly. It generally remains not longer than three or four days at its maximum, and the same length of time at its minimum : it may therefore be said to be three months on the increase, and nine months gradually falling. It often remains without any apparent increase or diminution, at other times than those of its greatest or least elevation, and is subject to other slight irregularities.

The Nile becomes turbid a little before its rise is apparent, and soon after it assumes a green hue, which it retains more than a fortnight. Its water is extremely delicious even when it is most impregnated with earth; but then the Egyptians (excepting the lower orders) usually leave it to settle before they drink it, and put it in porous earthen bottles, which cool it by evaporation. While the Nile is green, the people generally abstain from drinking the water fresh from the river, having recourse to a supply previously drawn, and kept in cisterns.

The width of the Nile where there are no islands is in few parts more than half a mile. The branches which enclose the Delta are not so wide, generally speaking, as the undivided stream above; and the river is as wide in most parts of Upper Egypt as in the lower extremity of the valley.

The rapidity of the current when the waters are low is not greater than the rate of a mile and a quarter in an hour; but during the higher state of the river, the current is very rapid, and while vessels with furled sails are carried down by the stream with great speed, others ascend the river at an almost equal rate, favoured by the strong northerly winds, which prevail most when the current is most rapid. When the river is low, the *wind from the north* is often more powerful than

the current, and vessels cannot then descend the stream even with the help of oars.

I believe that I shall have occasion to add a few more words on the Nile some days hence, when I hope to send you the remainder of the general sketch.

Meanwhile, believe me to remain, &c.

LETTER VI.

October 13th, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE I last wrote to you, the weather has continued intensely hot; but during the last three days almost constant lightning throughout the evening, though succeeded by excessive heat during the nights, has given us hope of speedy relief. This heat is attributed to the present state of the Nile, which has continued most unusually increasing up to this time (the 13th of October), and given rise to serious apprehensions; for unless the water drain quickly off the land when the river begins to fall, it is feared that a severe plague may ensue. In such a case, we propose going up to Thebes for four months, but we earnestly hope it may please Almighty God to avert so dreadful a calamity as a pestilence must inevitably prove. I now resume the sketch I left unfinished in my last letter.

The climate of Egypt is generally very salubrious. The extraordinary dryness of the atmosphere (excepting in the maritime parts) is proved by the wonderful state of preservation in which bread,

meal, fruits, &c. have been found in the tombs of ancient Thebes, after having been deposited there two or three thousand years. The ancient monuments of Egypt have suffered very little from the weather: the colours with which some of them are adorned retain almost their pristine brightness. There arises from the waters of the fields a considerable exhalation (though not often visible), during the inundation, and for some months afterwards; but even then it seems perfectly dry immediately within the skirts of the desert, where most of the monuments of antiquity are situated.*

The heat in Egypt is very great; but not so oppressive as might be imagined, on account of that extreme dryness of the atmosphere of which I have spoken, and the prevalence of northerly breezes.†

Rain is a very rare phenomenon in the valley of Egypt. In the Sa'eed, a heavy rain falls not

* The damp at this period, slight as it is, occasions ophthalmia, diarrhoea, and dysentery, to be more prevalent now than at other times.

† The general height of the thermometer (Fahrenheit's) in Lower Egypt during the hot season, at noon, and in the shade, is from 90° to 100° ; in Upper Egypt, from 100° to 110° ; and in Nubia, from 110° to 120° , and even 130° , though in few years. In the latter country, if placed in the sand and exposed to the sun, the thermometer often rises to 150° or more. The temperature of Lower Egypt in the depth of winter is from 50° to 60° .

softerner, on the average, than once in four or five years. My brother witnessed such an occurrence at Thebes, a tremendous storm of lightning and rain, in the autumn of 1827. Lightning is frequently seen, but thunder is seldom heard. On that occasion it was quite terrific, and lasted throughout a whole night. The torrents which pour down the sides and ravines of the naked mountains which hem in the valley of Egypt, on these occasions, though so rare, leave very conspicuous traces. Here, in Cairo, and in the neighbouring parts, there fall on the average four or five smart showers in the year, and those generally during the winter and spring. Most unusually (but this is in every respect an unusual season), it rained heavily on the night of the 30th of September. A heavy rain very rarely falls, and when it does, much damage is done to the houses. In the maritime parts of Egypt, rain is not so infrequent.

The prevalence of the north-westerly wind is one of the most remarkable advantages of climate the Egyptians enjoy. The north-west breeze is ever refreshing and salubrious, beneficial to vegetation, and of the greatest importance in facilitating the navigation of the Nile at almost every season of the year, and particularly during that period when the river is rising, and the current consequently the most rapid. During the first three

months of the decrease of the river; that is, from the autumnal equinox to the winter-solstice, the wind is rather variable ; sometimes blowing from the west, south, or east ; but still the northerly winds are most frequent. During the next three months, the wind is more variable ; and during the last three months of the decrease of the river, from the vernal equinox to the summer solstice, winds from the south, or south-east, often hot and very oppressive, are frequent, but of short duration.

During a period called "El-Khamáseen," hot southerly winds are very frequent, and particularly noxious.. This period is said to commence on the day after the Coptic festival of Easter-Sunday, and to terminate on Whit-Sunday ; thus continuing forty-nine days.. It generally begins in the latter part of April, and lasts during the whole of May. This is the most unhealthy season in Egypt ; and while it lasts the inhabitants are apprehensive of being visited by the plague ; but their fears cease on the termination of that period. It is remarkable that we have already suffered much from hot wind, for it is most unusual at this season. During July and August it was frequently distressing ; and I can only compare it to the blast from a furnace, rendering every article of furniture literally hot, and always continuing three days. Having, happily, glass windows, we closed them in the direction of the wind; and found the close atmosphere infinitely

more bearable than the heated blast. This was a season of extreme anxiety, being quite an unexpected ordeal for my children ; but, I thank God, excepting slight indisposition, they escaped unhurt.

The "Samoom," which is a very violent, hot, and almost suffocating wind, is of more rare occurrence than the Khamáseen winds, and of shorter duration ; its continuance being more brief in proportion to the intensity of its parching heat, and the impetuosity of its course. Its direction is generally from the south-east, or south-south-east. It is commonly preceded by a fearful calm. As it approaches, the atmosphere assumes a yellowish hue, tinged with red ; the sun appears of a deep blood colour, and gradually becomes quite concealed before the hot blast is felt in its full violence. The sand and dust raised by the wind add to the gloom, and increase the painful effects of the heat and rarity of the air. Respiration becomes uneasy, perspiration seems to be entirely stopped ; the tongue is dry, the skin parched, and a prickling sensation is experienced, as if caused by electric sparks. It is sometimes impossible for a person to remain erect, on account of the force of the wind ; and the sand and dust oblige all who are exposed to it to keep their eyes closed. It is, however, most distressing when it overtakes travellers in the desert. My brother encountered at Koos, in Upper Egypt, a samoom which was said to be one of the

most violent ever witnessed. It lasted less than half an hour, and a very violent samoom seldom continues longer. My brother is of opinion that, although it is extremely distressing, it can never prove fatal, unless to persons already brought almost to the point of death by disease, fatigue, thirst, or some other cause. The poor camel seems to suffer from it equally with his master; and will often lie down with his back to the wind, close his eyes, stretch out his long neck upon the ground, and so remain until the storm has passed over.

Another very remarkable phenomenon is the + “Zóba’ah,” and very common in Egypt, and in the adjacent deserts. It is a whirlwind, which raises the sand or dust in the form of a pillar, generally of immense height.* These whirling pillars of sand (of which my brother has seen more than twelve in one day, and often two or three at a time during the spring) are carried

* “I measured” (says my brother) “the height of a zóba’ah, with a sextant, at Thebes, under circumstances which insured a very near approximation to perfect accuracy (observing its altitude from an elevated spot, at the precise moment when it passed through, and violently agitated, a distant group of palm-trees), and found it to be seven hundred and fifty feet. I think that several zóba’ahs I have seen were of greater height. Others which I measured at the same place were between five and seven hundred feet in height.”—*Modern Egyptians*, 3rd Edition, Part I. chap. 2.

sometimes with very great rapidity across the deserts and fields of Egypt; and over the river. My brother's boat was twice crossed by a zóba'ah; but on each occasion its approach was seen, and necessary precautions were taken; both the sails were let fly a few moments before it reached the boat; but the boxes and cushions in the cabin were thrown down by the sudden heeling of the vessel, and everything was covered with sand and dust.

The "Saráb," called by Europeans "mirage," which resembles a lake, and is so frequently seen in the desert, tantalizing the thirsty traveller, I mentioned to you in a former letter. The illusion is often perfect, the objects within and beyond the apparent lake being reflected by it with the utmost precision. You probably know that the reflection is produced by a heated stratum of air upon the glowing surface of a plain; and you may have seen something of the same kind in England.

The fields in the vicinity of the river, and of the great canals, are irrigated by means of machines at all seasons of the year, if not subject to the natural inundation. For a description of these, I refer you to the "Modern Egyptians," 3rd edition, Part II. chap. i.; and I will now conclude this letter with a concise physical and agricultural *calendar* of Egypt, drawn up by my brother from Arabic works, and from his own observations.

January.—The mean temperature in the after-

noon during this month at Cairo is about 60°. The waters which, during the season of the inundation, had been retained upon the fields by means of dams, have now sunk into the soil; but water still remains in some of the large canals, their mouths having been stopped up. The river has lost about half the height it had attained; that is to say, it has sunk about twelve feet in and about the latitude of Cairo. The wind at this season, and throughout the winter, is very variable; but the northerly winds are most frequent. People should now abstain from eating fowls, and all crude and cold vegetables. The poppy is sown. It is unwholesome to drink water during the night at this season, and throughout the winter. The fifth Coptic month (Toobeh) begins on the 8th or 9th of January.* Now is the season of extreme cold. Beef should not be eaten at this period. The fields begin to be covered with verdure. The vines are trained. Carrots plentiful. Onions sown. The date-palm sown. The ripe sugarcanes cut.

February.—The mean temperature in the afternoon during this month at Cairo is about 66°.

* See a note on the beginning of the first Coptic month, in September. The Egyptians (Muslims as well as Christians) still divide the seasons by the Coptic months; but for dates, in their writings, they generally use the lunar Mohammedian months.

End of the season of extreme cold.* The fields everywhere throughout Egypt are covered with verdure. The sixth Coptic month (Amsheer) begins on the 7th or 8th of February. Warm water should be drunk fasting at this season. The wind very variable. The harvest of beans. The pomegranate tree blossoms. Vines are planted. Trees put forth their leaves. The season of the winds which bring rain, called el-Cawákeh. The cold ceases to be severe.

March.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 68°. End of the season for planting trees. The seventh Coptic month (Barmahát) begins on the 9th of March. Variable and tempestuous winds. **THE VERNAL EQUINOX.** During the quarter now commencing the river continues decreasing; the wind often blows from the south or south-east; and the samoom winds (from the same quarters) occur most frequently during this period; the plague also generally visits Egypt at this season, if at all. The weather becomes mild. Northerly winds become prevalent. The wheat-harvest begins. Lentils are reaped; cotton, sesame, and indigo sown; and the sugar-cane planted. The barley-harvest begins.

* Such is the statement of the Egyptian almanacks; but there are generally as cold days in the month of Amsheer as in *Toobeh*, and sometimes colder.

April.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 76°. Time for taking medicine. The eighth Coptic month (Bar-moodeh) begins on the 8th of April. Samoom winds. Time for the fecundation of the date-palm. Rice sown. The wheat-harvest in Lower Egypt. Beginning of the first season for sowing millet. The Khamáseen winds generally commence in this month.

May.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 85°. The Khamáseen winds prevail principally during this month ; and the season is consequently unhealthy. Winter clothing disused. The ninth Coptic month (Beshens) begins on the 8th of May. Time for taking medicine, and losing blood. Season of the yellow water-melon. Cucumbers sown. The apricot bears ; and the mulberry. Turnips sown. End of the first season for sowing millet. The apricot ripens. Beginning of the season of great heat. Beginning also of the season of the hot winds, called “el-bawáreh,” which prevail during forty days.

June.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 94°. Strong northerly winds prevail about this time. The water of the Nile becomes turbid, but does not yet begin to rise. The tenth Coptic month (Ba-ooneh) begins on the 7th of June. The banana sown. Samoom winds. Strong perfumes (as musk, &c.)

are disused now, and throughout the summer. The yellow water-melon abundant. The plague, if any existed previously, now ceases. Honey collected. People should abstain from drinking the water of the Nile at this season for fifteen days,* unless first boiled. "The drop" (en-nuk-tah) descends into the Nile, and, according to popular belief, causes it to increase soon after: † this is said to happen on the 11th of Ba-ooneh, which corresponds with the 17th of June: it is the day before the Coptic festival of Michael the Archangel. The flesh of the kid is preferred at this season, and until the end of summer. Samoem winds blow occasionally during a period of seventy days, now commencing. THE SUMMER SOLSTICE, when the day is fourteen hours long in Lower Egypt. During the quarter now beginning (i.e. during the period of the increase of the Nile) northerly winds prevail almost uninterruptedly, excepting at night, when it is generally calm. Though the heat is great, this quarter is the most healthy season of the year. The Nile begins to rise now, or a few days earlier or later. The season for grapes and figs commences. Peaches plentiful.

July.—Mean temperature in the afternoon

* Commencing from the 10th of Ba-ooneh (or the 16th of June).

† It is really a heavy dew which falls about this time.

during this month, at Cairo, about 98°. The rise of the Nile is now daily proclaimed in the metropolis. Locusts die, or disappear, in every part of Egypt. The eleventh Coptic month (Ebeeb) begins on the 7th of July. Violent northerly winds prevail for fifteen days.* Honey abundant. People should abstain from eating plentifully at this season. The noonday heat is now excessive. Ophthalmia prevails now, but not so much now as in the autumn. The bawaheer, or seven days of extreme heat, fall at the end of this month.† Grapes and figs abundant. Maize is now sown. Harvest of the first crop of millet. The date ripens.

August.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 92°. Season for pressing grapes. The last Coptic month (Misra) begins on the 6th of August. Onions should not be eaten at this time. Radishes and carrots sown. Cold water should be drunk, fasting. Watermelons plentiful. The season for gathering cotton. The pomegranate ripens. Violent northerly winds. Sweetmeats should not be eaten at this time. “The wedding of the Nile” takes place on the

* Fleas disappear now; and if you can form a just idea of the annoyance they occasion, you will not think the insertion of this information unimportant.

† They are said to commence on the 20th of Ebeeb, or 26th of July.

14th, or one of the five following days of the month of Misra (the 19th to the 24th of August); this is when the dam of earth which closes the entrance of the canal of Cairo is broken down; it having been first announced that the river has risen (in the latitude of the metropolis) sixteen cubits, which is an exaggeration.* Second season for sowing millet. Mosquitoes abound now. End of the seventy days in which samoom winds frequently occur.

September.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 88°. White beet and turnip sown. Windy weather. The beginning of the month Toot—the first of the Coptic year; corresponding with the 10th or 11th of September, according as five or six intercalary days are added at the end of the Coptic year preceding.† Ripe dates abundant, and limes. Windy

* The true rise at this period is about 19 or 20 feet; the river, therefore, has yet to rise about 4 or 5 feet more, on the average.

† “Five intercalary days are added at the end of three successive years; and six at the end of the fourth year. The Coptic leap-year immediately precedes ours: therefore, the Coptic year begins on the 11th of September, only when it is the next after their leap-year; or when our next ensuing year is a leap-year: and consequently after the following February, the corresponding days of the Coptic and our months will be the same as in other years. The Copts begin their reckoning from the era of Diocletian, A.D. 284.” —*Modern Egyptians*, Part I., chap. ix.

weather. **THE AUTUMNAL EQUINOX.** The Nile is now, or a few days later, at its greatest height; and all the canals are opened. During the quarter now commencing (*i.e.* during the first three months of the decrease of the river), the wind is very variable; often blowing from the west, and sometimes from the south. The exhalations from the alluvial soil, in consequence of the inundation, occasion ophthalmia, diarrhoea, and dysentery to be more prevalent in this quarter than at other seasons.
Harvest of sesame.

October.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 80°. The leaves of trees become yellow. Green sugar-canies cut, to be sucked. Drinking water at night, after sleep, is pernicious at this season. The henna-leaves gathered. Winter vegetables sown. The second Coptic month (*Bábeh*) begins on the 10th or 11th of October. Wheat, barley, lentils, beans, lupins, chick-peas, kidney-beans, trefoil, fenugreek, colewort, lettuce, and safflower are sown now, or a little later. Bleeding is injurious now. The dews resulting from the inundation increase.

November.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 72°. The cold during the latter part of the night is now pernicious. The third Coptic month (*Katoor*) begins on the 9th or 10th of November. Rain is now expected in Lower Egypt. The “mereesee,” or

south wind, prevalent. The rice-harvest. The maize-harvest, and second harvest of millet. Winter-clothing assumed. Bananas plentiful.

December.—Mean temperature in the afternoon during this month, at Cairo, about 68°.. Tempestuous and cloudy weather. Strong perfumes, as musk, ambergris, &c., are agreeable now. The fourth Coptic month (Kiyahk) begins on the 9th or 10th of December. The leaves of trees fall. **THE WINTER SOLSTICE;**, when the day is ten hours long in Lower Egypt. The wind is variable during this quarter. Beginning of the season for planting trees. Fleas multiply.. The vines are pruned. Beef is not considered wholesome food at this season.

LETTER VII.

October 18th, Ramadán, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The leading topic of conversation in this country, at the present time, is the state of the Nile, which has hitherto (to the 18th of October) continued rising, and occasioned a general fear that a severe plague will ensue on the subsiding of the inundation. In 1818, it rose until the 16th of October; but never so late since that time, nor for a considerable period before. Our house is flooded in the lower part; and in some of the streets of Cairo, the water is within a foot of the surface, while it has entered many of the houses.

This is the 12th day of Ramadán, or the month of abstinence; and I do heartily pity those who observe the fast, for the weather is again intensely hot, and it is marvellous how any person can observe the law, denying himself from daybreak to sunset, even a draught of water. I really think there are very many conscientious fasters; and it would interest you exceedingly to walk through the streets of Cairo during this month, and observe the varieties of deportment visible among the

people. Some are sitting idly, holding an ornamented stick, or with a string of beads in their hands. Boys, fasting for the first time, and even men, are endeavouring to distract their attention with the most childish toys; while many are exhibiting, in various ways, that fasting does not improve their tempers.

Some days since, as it drew near the hour of sunset, an aged couple were passing near our present dwelling, the old woman leading her blind husband by the hand, and carrying his pipe, that it might be ready for him as soon as the law should allow him to enjoy it. Bent as they were by age and infirmity, it was sad to see that they were evidently among the fasters, and it was a sight to excite compassion and respect; for as so many of the aged sink into their last earthly home, when the month of abstinence has passed, the fear that they too might prove martyrs to the requirements of their religion was far from groundless, and naturally present to the mind of the observer.

The great among the Muslims in general turn night into day during Ramadán; therefore they are seldom seen in the streets. Most of them sleep from daybreak until the afternoon; while others break their fast in private. I do not think that this is done by the lower orders; and no one can hear the cry of joy which rings and echoes through the city at sunset, when, in token that the fasting

is over, for at least some hours, a cannon is discharged from the citadel, without rejoicing with the people, that another day of Ramadán has passed. But no sound is so imposing as the night-call to prayer from the numerous menarets. I mentioned to you our impressions on hearing it first at Alexandria; but here, in Cairo, it is infinitely more striking. On some occasions, when the wind is favourable, we can hear perhaps a hundred voices, in solemn, and indeed harmonious, concert. Here the Mueddins, raised between earth and heaven, call on their fellow-creatures to worship Heaven's God; and oh! as their voices are borne on the night-wind, let the silent prayer of every Christian who hears them ascend to a throne of grace for mercy on their behalf. They are more especially objects of pity, because they have the light of the Gospel in their land; but how is that light obscured! prejudice, and (shall I write it?) the conduct of many Europeans dwelling among them, and calling themselves Christians, have blinded their eyes, and because of the sins of others, the true Christian spends his strength in vain. Far be it from me to cast a sweeping censure, but our respectable and respected friends here will join me as I raise my voice against those nominal Christians, who, by their profligacy, prove ever "rocks a-head" to the already prejudiced Muslim. This always important city may now

be ranked among "men's thoroughfares" in a wide sense, and we must only hope that the day may come when the phrase, "these are Christians," will no longer convey reproach.

The Mohammedan months are lunar, and consequently retrograde; and when Ramadán occurs in the summer, the obligation to abstain from water during the long sultry days is fearful in its consequences. At sunset, the fasting Muslim takes his breakfast; and this meal generally commences with light refreshment, such as sweet cakes, raisins, &c.; for, from long abstinence, many persons find themselves in so weak a state, that they cannot venture to eat immediately a full meal. Many break their fast with merely a glass of sherbet, or a cup of coffee. This refreshment is succeeded by a substantial meal, equal to their usual dinner. They often retire to obtain a short sleep. Usually, two hours after sunset, criers greet all the persons in their respective districts, beating a small drum at the doors, and saying something complimentary to the inmates of each house. Again, the morning call to prayer is chanted much earlier than usual, perhaps an hour and a half before daybreak, to remind all to take their second meal; and the crier also goes another round, making a loud noise, in which he perseveres until he is answered, at each house where his attention is required. Thus, you see, no small pains are

taken to remind the faster to avail himself of his opportunities ; and it is singular to hear the variety of noises which disturb the nights of this most unpleasant month. At daybreak, each morning, the last signal is made from the citadel, by the firing of a cannon, for the removal of all food ; and on some occasions, this report seems to shake the city to the very foundations. The open lattice windows oblige us to hear all the noises I have described. Our windows are furnished with glazed frames, in addition to the carved wooden lattice-work, but the former are only closed in the winter, for those who desire to enjoy any sleep during the hot season must keep all windows (and if possible doors also) open. Judging by my own surprise at the degree of heat we have endured since our arrival, I imagine you have no adequate idea of it. On my opening, a few days since, a card-box full of sealing-wax, I found the whole converted into an oblong mass, fitting the lower part of the box.

As to the vermin of Egypt, I really think that +
the *flies* occasion the greatest annoyance, so abundant are they, and so distressing. Nets placed at the doors and windows exclude them ; but there are days, indeed weeks and months, in Egypt, when the temperature is so oppressive, that it is not possible to allow the air to be impeded, even by a net. Mosquitoes too are very troublesome in the worn-

ings and evenings, and much reduce the comfort of early rising. This is a serious inconvenience here, for we find the most agreeable hours are in the early mornings and in the cool evenings, after sunset. The old houses abound with bugs, but in this respect we have been particularly fortunate; for we have not been annoyed by these very disgusting insects. Fleas are very troublesome during their season, I am told, but with us their season has not yet begun; and I think and hope cleanliness in our house will, in a great degree, prevent their attentions. "There are insects" (as I once heard a lecturer on natural history express himself) "which must be nameless in all polite society;" therefore, my dear friend, they must be nameless here, but of these we have seen five. These arrived at five different times in parcels of *new* linen from a bazaar, and their arrival has occasioned the closest scrutiny when any thing new is brought to us.

Rats, also, are extremely annoying, and nothing escapes their depredations, unless secured in wire safes, or hung up at a sufficient distance from the walls. These animals run about our bedrooms during the nights; and I sometimes think they come in at the open windows. They are generally harmless, but sufficiently tiresome. Lizards too are very common, but perfectly innocuous, and occupy themselves entirely on the ceilings and windows in chasing flies, on which they seem to

subsist. I told you I feared much from the antiquated cobwebs that spiders would be numerous. They are so truly, and so very large that I will not risk giving my opinion of their size; it is so far beyond any European specimen I have seen. But the gravest annoyances are scorpions, and of these we have found three, one of which was exactly three inches in length. I was much distressed on finding these, but comforted on hearing that if the wound they inflict be immediately scarified, and an application of sal ammoniac be made, it does not prove fatal. These applications, however, though absolutely necessary, are very painful; and I trust we may be spared the necessity of resorting to such means. Fearing for my children, for their sakes I am a coward, and I feel it is ever necessary to bear in mind that we cannot wander where we can be outcasts from the care of Heaven, or strangers to the protecting Providence of God.

I have suffered this letter to remain unfinished for a whole week, expecting daily that I might be able to tell you of the end of this year's inundation. This I am now able to do; but must first mention, that we have experienced a most extraordinary storm of wind, accompanied by such clouds of dust, that we were obliged to close our eyes and wait patiently until its fury had in some measure passed away. When it abated we looked out upon the city, and could only see the tops of its minarets

above the sea of dust, and its lofty palm-trees bending before the blast. I have *heard* such a hurricane, during the night, once since our arrival in Cairo, and fearful indeed it was, but I have never seen its effects until now. This was not one of the winds to which the Easterns give a name, such as the Zóba'ah, the Khamáseen winds, or the Samoom ; but a strong sweeping wind from the north-east. In looking down upon the many ruins of Cairo, I feel astonished by the fact of their withstanding such a hurricane. A storm like this is generally preceded and followed by a perfect calm.

This day (the 25th of October) is the first of the decrease of the Nile. It is usually at its greatest height, as I have already mentioned, at the end of September. It is not extraordinary that it should be a high inundation ; that is well accounted for this year, as it has been in the two preceding years, by the construction of many new embankments, but it is the lateness of the inundation which is so exceedingly unusual. It rose considerably on the 23rd instant, and on the 24th slightly ; and I find no one with whom we are acquainted here among the residents who remembers such an occurrence.

"A very grievous murrain," forcibly reminding us of that which visited this same country in the days of Moses, has prevailed during the last three months, and the already distressed peasants feel the *calamity* severely, or rather (I should say) the few

who possess cattle. Among the rich men of the country, the loss has been enormous. During our voyage up the Nile, we observed several dead cows and buffaloes lying in the river, as I mentioned in a former letter ; and some friends who followed us two months after, saw many on the banks ; indeed, up to this time, great numbers of cattle are dying in every part of the country, and the prevailing excitement leads me to recur to the subject.

LETTER VIII.

November 26th.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

+ I HAVE just returned from witnessing the curious procession of the Mahmal, preparatory to the departure of the great caravan of pilgrims to Mekkah. We were early on the way, and after riding for nearly an hour we found ourselves in the main street of the city, opposite to the Khán el-Khalelee, the chief Turkish bazaar of Cairo. I felt more than ever convinced that donkeys were the only safe means of conveyance in the streets of this city. A lady never rides but on a donkey, with a small carpet laid over the saddle. For gentlemen, horses are now more used than donkeys; but their riders encounter much inconvenience. In many cases, this morning, our donkeys threaded their way among loaded camels, where horses were turned back; and my apprehensions lest the large bales of goods should really sweep my boys from their saddles, were scarcely removed by the extreme care of their attendants, who always kept one arm round each of my children, in passing through the dangerous thoroughfares. I assure

you it is an exceedingly awkward thing to ride through the streets of Cairo at any time; but especially so during a season of festivity.

We had engaged for the day a room on a first floor, commanding a good view of the street, and we had not been long seated before an extraordinary uproar commenced. This arose from crowds of boys, provided with sticks, and absolutely privileged (as is usual on the days of this procession) to beat all Christians and Jews. A poor Frank gentleman was attacked under the window we were occupying, and protected with difficulty by some Arabs, who interposed with much kindness. It was especially matter of congratulation to-day, that our party were supposed to be Easterns, and that we had so learnt to *carry* the dress that we were not suspected. On one occasion, not long since, my donkey stumbled, and a Turkish gentleman, who was passing me, exclaimed, "Yá Sátir" (O! Protector). Had he supposed I was an English-woman, I imagine he would not have invoked protection for me. The prejudice against Europeans is especially strong, as they are said to have enlightened the Pasha too much on matters of finance; but to-day I will dismiss this subject, and tell you of the procession, while it is fresh in my recollection.

The first persons who passed, belonging to the procession, were two men with drawn swords, who

engaged occasionally in mock combat. Next came a grotesque person, well mounted, and wearing a high pointed cap, and an immense beard of twisted hemp, and clothed in sheep-skins. He held a slender stick in his right hand, and in his left a bundle of papers, on which he pretended, with a tragical expression of countenance, to write judicial opinions. Next followed *the gun* of the caravan, a small brass field-piece, an hour and a half before noon, preceded by a company of Nizám troops, and followed by another company, headed by their band ; the musical instruments being European. I cannot praise their performance, yet it approached nearer to music than any attempt I have heard in Egypt. It remains, however, for me to hear the professional singers of this country ; and I am told by persons of undoubted taste, that if I do not admire the airs they sing, I shall be surprised at their skill and the quality of their voices.

The soldiers were followed by a long procession of Darweeshes. First came the Saadeeyeh, with numerous flags, bearing, in many cases, the names of God, Mohammad, and the founder of their order, on a ground of green silk. Most of these Darweeshes were beating a small kettle-drum called báz, which is held in the left hand, and beaten with a short thick strap. Some were beating cymbals, and all repeating religious ejaculations, chiefly names and epithets of God. They

were perpetually bowing their heads to the right and to the left during the whole repetition, and this motion was rendered the more apparent by many of them wearing very high felt caps; then, the variety in their costume, and, more than all, the gravity of their deportment, combined to rivet our attention. These Darweeshes were followed by a body of their parent order (the Refá-eeyeh), bearing black flags, and also beating bázes and cymbals, and repeating the like ejaculations. Their sheykh, a venerable-looking person, wearing a very large black turban, rode behind them, on horseback. Then passed the Kádireeyeh Darweeshes: their principal insignia were borne by members of their order; viz. palm-sticks, for fishing-rods; and fishing-nets strained on hoops, and raised on long poles, with many small fish suspended round them. They carried white flags. Next followed the Ahmedeeyeh, and Baráhiméh Darweeshes, bearing red and green flags; and immediately after these came "the Mahmal."

The Mahmal is a mere emblem of royalty, and contains nothing; but two copies of the Kurán, in cases of gilt silver, are fastened to the exterior. It is an imitation of a covered litter, borne on the back of a camel; and it accompanies the caravan yearly, forming, if I may use the expression, the banner of the pilgrims. Many persons have

understood that it contains the Kisweh, or new covering for the temple of Mekkah ; but they are mistaken. The origin of this ceremony, as related in the "Modern Egyptians," was as follows :—“ Sheger-ed-Durr (commonly called Shegerel-ed-Durr), a beautiful Turkish female slave, who became the favourite wife of the Sultan Es-Sileh Negm-ed-Deen, and on the death of his son (with whom terminated the dynasty of the house of Eiyoob) caused herself to be acknowledged as Queen of Egypt, performed the pilgrimage in a magnificent Hódag (or covered litter), borne by a camel; and for several successive years her empty litter was sent with the caravan merely for the sake of state. Hence, succeeding princes of Egypt sent with each year's caravan of pilgrims a kind of Hódag (which received the name of Mahmal, or Mahmil) as an emblem of royalty, and the kings of other countries followed their example.”* The usual covering of the Mahmal has been black brocade ; that I have seen this morning is red, and I understand that it is shabby in comparison with those of former years : indeed each year (my brother tells me) all that is connected with this procession becomes less remarkable, and less money is expended on it by the government. But to me, and to those of us who had not pre-

* *Modern Egyptians*, 3rd ed., part ii., p. 203.

viously seen it, it was extremely interesting. There were none of the great men habited in cloth of gold, who preceded it on former occasions; neither were the camels handsomely caparisoned.

The half-naked sheykh who has for so many years followed the Mahmal, incessantly rolling his head, for which feat he receives a gratuity from the government, rode on a fine horse immediately after it. If he be the same man (and I am informed he is the very same) who has year after year committed this absurdity, it is wonderful that his head has borne such unnatural and long-continued motion. There followed him a number of led camels and horses, and their decorations were extremely picturesque, but not costly. The camels were ornamented in various ways; one having small bells, strung on either side of a saddle ornamented with coloured cloth; others with palm-branches, ostrich feathers, and small flags fixed on similar saddles decorated with cowries. These were succeeded by a company of regular troops, followed by the Emeer-el-Hágg (or chief of the pilgrims). Then passed the usual collection of the presents which are distributed during the pilgrimage; and then, a number of drummers mounted on camels, and beating enormous kettle-drums; after these, some more led camels, and a numerous group bearing mesh'als, the tops of which were covered with coloured kerchiefs. "The mesh'al

is a staff with a cylindrical frame of iron at the top filled with wood, or having two, three, four, or five of these receptacles for fire."* These were for the purpose of lighting the caravan ; as the journey is mostly performed during the cool hours of night. Another company of officers and soldiers followed these ; and then the litter and baggage of the Emeer-el-Hágg. His first supply of water passed next, borne by a number of camels, each laden with four skins ; and these were succeeded by led camels closing the procession.

Had we gone merely with the view of seeing the spectators, we should have been amply rewarded. The shops and their benches were crowded with people of many countries ; and the variety in their costume and manners formed an amusing study. The windows of the first and second floors were perfectly full of women, children, and slaves ; and here and there a richly embroidered dress was seen through the lattice.

On one point all denominations of people seemed agreed ; viz. in purchasing something for their children from almost all the venders of sweets, and many passed constantly on this occasion ; therefore their poor children kept up a continual system of cramming during the whole procession ; and here my eyes were opened to a new manner of account-

* *Modern Egyptians*, 3rd ed., part i., p. 254.

ing for the generally wretched appearance of the children of this country. Their parents put anything and everything that is eatable into their mouths, without the slightest regard to its being wholesome or otherwise. How then can they be strong or healthy?

LETTER IX.

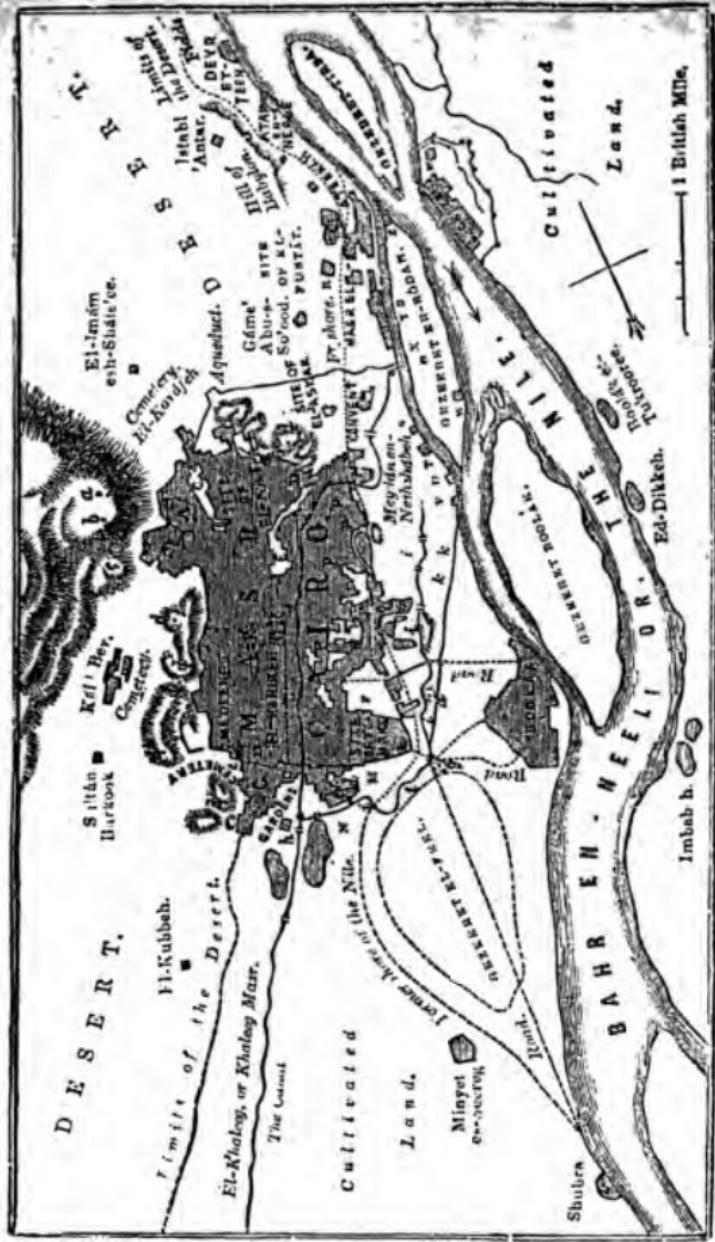
November, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SHALL now endeavour to give you some account of Cairo and its environs, with the help of a series of historical notes, for which I am indebted to my brother, who has derived his information on these subjects chiefly from El-Makreezee's 'Historical and Topographical Account of Egypt and its Metropolis.' This work of El-Makreezee is chiefly a compilation from the writings of other Arab historians and geographers; and those parts of which my brother has availed himself contain observations of many authors of different ages.

The first city founded by the Arabs in Egypt was El-Fustát. It was the residence of the governors of that country for more than a century; but after the overthrow of the dynasty of the Uma-weeyeh (or race of Umeeyeh), a new city called El-'Askar, adjoining El-Fustát, became the seat of government. Afterwards, another city, which

TOPOGRAPHICAL PLAN OF CAIRO AND ITS ENVIRONS.



EXPLANATION OF THE TOPOGRAPHICAL PLAN OF CAIRO AND ITS ENVIRONS.

A, The Citadel.	L, Bab-el-Bahr; now more commonly called Bab el-Haddeed.	Z, The Mikyās, or Nilometer.
B, Place called the Rumeyleh.	M, Tract formerly called Ard et Tabulieh.	a, b, Mosque and Fort on Mount Mākattam.
C, The Cara Meydān.	N, Site of the Garden of El-Beal.	c, Ruin called Kubbet el-Hawa.
D, Kal'at el Kebsh.	O, El-Look, and Bab el-Look.	d, d, d, d, d, d, Forts erected by the French on the mounds of rubbish.
E, Birket el-Feol.	P, Tract which was occupied by the Gardens of El-Zahree.	e, Cemetery of Hab en-Nasr.
F, El-Ezbekeyeh.	Q, Kasr es-Sheria.	f, Birket er-Ratlee.
G, El Illoseyneeyeh.	R, Mosque of 'Amr.	g, Telegraph.
H, Space between the Bab en-Nasr of the first wall of El-Kahireh (marked by the dotted line) and that of the second wall.	S, Convent of Darweeshees.	h, Gāme' El-Zahir (a ruined mosque).
I, Space between the Bab el-Futooh of the first wall and that of the second.	T, Kasr El-'Eynee.	i, i, i, i, Western Canal, formerly called El-Khalleg en-Nafies.
K, Space between the Babā Zuweyleh of the first wall and the Bab Zuweyleh of the second.	U, V, Palace and Harem of Ibrahim Busha.	j, k, New Canal.
	W, Kafr 'Abd-El-'Azees (a village).	
	X, Kafr Kālid-Bey (a village).	
	Y, Kasr er-Rūdah.	



received the name of El-Katâ'ë (or El-Katâyë), was built in the neighbourhood of El-'Askar; and the independent princes of the family of Tooloon resided there. After the extinction of this dynasty El-'Askar became again the seat of government, and continued so until the general of El-Mo'ezz obtained possession of Egypt, and founded El-Kâhireh, which is now called Masr, or (by Europeans) Cairo.

El-Fustât was built upon the spot where the army of the Arabs encamped for a short time, after their conquest of Egypt, in the 20th year of the Flight (or A.D. 641). It received this name, which signifies "the Tent," from its having been founded around the tent of the Arab general 'Amr Ibn El-'A's, or (according to some authors) merely because "Fustât" is a term applicable to any city. It was, however, more commonly known by the name of Masr, which name has been lately transferred to Cairo. The appellation of Masr El-'Ateekah (or Old Masr) is now given to the small town which at present occupies a part of the site of El-Fustât. This town has been improperly called by European travellers "Old Cairo;" as well might Egyptian Babylon be called old Fustât.

The site of El-Fustât at the period of the Arabian conquest was unoccupied by any buildings, excepting a Roman fortress, still existing, called

Kasr esh-Shema, on the north of the hill of Babylon ; but in the neighbourhood were many churches and convents. The Nile, at that period, flowed close by the fortress above mentioned. El-Fustát is described as a very fine city, containing houses five or six stories high, constructed of brick. The primary cause of its decline was the great famine which happened in the reign of El-Mustansir, in the middle of the fifth century of the Flight, and which lasted seven years. About a century after this awful calamity, the greater part of the city was destroyed by fire, to prevent its falling a prey to an invading Christian army.* It was partly rebuilt, but never regained its former opulence.

El-'Askar was founded in the year of the Flight 133 (A.D. 750-1), long before the decline of El-Fustát, which continued to be the metropolis of Egypt, though the governors no longer resided there. El-'Askar was rather a suburb of El-Fustát than a distinct city. El-Kataë', or El-Katáyé, was founded in the year of the Flight 256 (A.D. 869-70). It lay immediately on the west of the hill which is now occupied by the citadel of Cairo ; and was about a mile in extent, from north to south, and from east to west. In the year 292, when the dynasty of the race of Tooloon was sub-

* Under Amaury, King of Jerusalem, called by the Egyptians Mercé.

verted, this town was plundered, and partly destroyed by fire; and it is said that the great famine in the reign of El-Mustansir destroyed all its inhabitants, leaving it to fall to ruin. Its site has become included within the suburbs of Cairo, and its great mosque, founded by Ibn Tooloon, yet remains.

The site of another town, which was called El-Maks, and which existed before the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs, is also now included within the suburban districts of Cairo. Medeenet El-Káhireh (the city of El-Káhireh or Cairo) originally occupied a space about three quarters of a mile square. It was founded in the year of the Flight 358 (A.D. 968-9). The first wall was pulled down in the year 480 (A.D. 1087-8), and a new one built, which included a small additional space on the north and south. This was pulled down in the year 572 (A.D. 1176-7), and the citadel and a third wall were built by Saláh-ed-Deen (the Saladin of European historians). The third wall extended, from the citadel, along the eastern and northern sides of the metropolis, partly encompassing El-Maks, on the western side of which it terminated, being left unfinished. It was the intention of its builder to have made it to surround Cairo and the citadel, and El-Fustát. The suburbs of Cairo have become much more extensive than the original city.

I must now give you a brief account of the changes which have taken place in the bed of the river in the neighbourhood of El-Fustát and Cairo, chiefly since the foundation of the latter of those cities, for I think them very remarkable.

We are informed by El-Makreezee that, at the period of the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs, Er-Ródah was the only island existing in the neighbourhood of the sites of the two cities above-mentioned. It was believed that the colossal figure called Abu-l-Hól (the great Sphinx near the Pyramids of El-Geezeh), and a similar colossus on the opposite side of the Nile, were talismans contrived by the ancient Egyptians, to prevent the sands of the adjacent deserts from encroaching upon the banks of the river; but in spite of the popular opinion respecting their magic influence, the latter of these colossi was demolished in the year of the Flight 711 (A.D. 1311-12); and about the year 780 (A.D. 1378-9), the face of Abu-l-Hól was mutilated by the fanatic Sheykh Mohammad, surnamed Sáim-ed-Dahr. Immediately after these periods, it is affirmed, the sands of the eastern and western deserts began to overspread the cultivable land intervening between them and the Nile, and to cause a considerable contraction of the bed of the river; in truth, however, the eastern limits of the river in the neighbourhood of Cairo had become very much contracted in the sixth and

seventh centuries of the Flight, and have experienced but little change since the commencement of the eighth century.

Before the contraction of its bed, the river flowed by the walls of the Kasr-esh-Shema, and the mosque of 'Amr; to the northward of El-Fustát, its eastern limits were bounded by the town of El-'Askar, the gardens of Ez-Zahree, the eastern part of the quarter called El-Look, the town of El-Maks, the tract called Ard-et-Tabbá-leh, the garden of El-Baal, and the village of Minyet-es-Seereg. Thus we see that the Nile formerly flowed close by the western suburbs and gardens of Cairo. Towards the close of the period of the dynasty of the Fawátim (the Khaleefehs of Egypt), a large vessel, called El-Feel (or the Elephant), was wrecked in the Nile, near El-Maks, and, remaining where it sank, occasioned an accumulation of sand and mud, which soon became an extensive and fertile island. This new island, from the circumstance which gave rise to it, received the name of Gezeeret el-Feel (or the Island of the Elephant). It is laid down in the plan which shall accompany this letter, according to the description of its situation and extent, given by El-Makreezee.

In the year of the Flight 570 (A.D. 1174-5), this island became united with the main land on the east; and from that period the river gradually

retired from the neighbourhood of El-Maks ; forming, by the deposit of soil during the successive seasons of the inundation, the wide plain upon which the town of Boolák is situated. Boolák was founded in the year of the Flight 713 (A.D. 1313-14) ; and the island which is named after it (Gezeeret Boolák) was formed about the same period.

Boolák is about a mile in length, and half a mile is the measure of its greatest breadth. It contains about 20,000 inhabitants. Its houses, streets, and shops, &c., are like those of the metropolis, of which I hope to give you a description in my next letter. Of the mosques of Boolák, the large one called the Sináneeyeh, and that of Abu-l'-Elé, are the most remarkable ; the first for its size, the latter for the beauty of its mad'neh, or menaret. The principal manufactories are those of cotton and linen cloths, and of striped silks of the same kind as the Syrian and Indian. Many Franks find employment in them. A printing-office has also been established at Boolák by the present Viceroy. Many works on military and naval tactics, and others on Arabic grammar, poetry, letter-writing, geometry, astronomy, surgery, &c., have issued from this press. The printing-office contains several *lithographic* presses, which are used for printing proclamations, tables illustrative of military and naval tactics, &c.

The city which is known to Europeans by the name of Cairo, or Grand Cairo, is called by the Egyptians Masr,* and in letters and other writings, the epithet El-Mahrooseh† (or The Guarded) is generally added. El-Káhir (or the planet Mars), an unpropitious star, being the ascendant at the period of its foundation, it was originally called El-Káhireh,‡ whence the Italianized name Cairo. It was founded at night. Astrologers had been consulted and had fixed on a propitious moment for laying the foundations of the city-wall. They were to have given a signal at that precise moment by ringing a number of bells, which were suspended to cords supported by poles, along the whole circumference of the intended wall; but a raven happening to alight upon one of the cords, the bells were put in motion before the chosen time; and the builders, who were waiting for the signal, immediately commenced their work—thus the city was founded at an inauspicious instead of a fortunate moment.§

* The Turks, and many other oriental foreigners, pronounce it Misr, and thus it is pronounced in the literary dialect of Arabic.

† In government documents, this epithet is often used alone to designate the Egyptian metropolis.

‡ El-Káhir and El-Káhireh (masc. and fem.) signify victorious.

§ El-Makreezee's account of the first wall.

From the landing-place at Boolak to the nearest gates of the metropolis, the distance is a little more than one mile. The southern road leads to the Esbekeeyeh and the Frank quarters, and the northern road leads (but not in a straight course) to the gate called Báb El-Hadeed, at the north-west angle of the city. At a short distance from this gate, it passed by a high mound of rubbish, upon which was a round tower, with a telegraph. This tower commanded a magnificent view of the metropolis, the citadel, and Mount Mukattam.

The area which the metropolis occupies is about three square miles. Its extreme length is three miles, and its extreme breadth one and a half. The population is about 240,000. Some travellers (judging by the narrowness of its streets, and from the crowds that are met in the great thoroughfares), have represented Cairo as a close, overpeopled city; and have attributed to this supposed closeness the origin and spread of those epidemic diseases with which it has been visited: but the case is far otherwise; it is a less close or crowded city than London or Paris, or perhaps any European metropolis. For a population of 248,000 inhabitants, the space of three square miles is certainly very ample. The streets are made narrow for the sake of shade, but most of the houses are large enough for twice as many

inmates as they contain, and are very airy, the windows being of open lattice work.

The walls by which nearly the whole of Cairo is surrounded are composed of the calcareous stone of the neighbouring mountains, and partly of the materials of some pyramidal tombs which were near the principal pyramids of El-Geezeh; but they are not of uniform strength, nor the work of one period. The metropolis is bounded on the eastern side, partly by a portion of the third wall (which was built by Salâh-ed-Deen), uniting with the walls of the citadel, and partly by modern walls of rude construction. The northern wall is well-built and lofty. The walls on the western and southern sides are irregular in their direction, low, and for the most part very ill constructed, more like the walls of a garden than those of a great city. High mounds of rubbish rise on the northern, eastern, and southern sides of the metropolis; the French erected many forts upon these mounds, which completely commanded the town, but they are now in a state of ruin. There were similar mounds on the western side; but these have been lately removed, and their site has been planted with olive trees, acacias, &c. The citadel overawes the town, but is itself commanded by the neighbouring mountain.

Three of the gates of Cairo are very fine struc-

tures. They were built with the second wall of the city, in the year of the Flight 480 (A.D. 1087-8), during the reign of El-Mustansir, and are almost the only monuments of the times of the Khaleefehs now remaining in Egypt. Two of these, called Báb en-Naṣr (or the Gate of Victory), and Báb el-Futooh (or the Gate of Conquests), are in the north wall, and between six and seven hundred feet apart. They are each about seventy feet high, and eighty feet or more in width. The former has two square towers, the latter two round fronted towers, and this gate is particularly handsome, but it cannot be viewed to advantage, as there are houses almost close before it. The third of the gates alluded to is that called Báb Zuwey-leh.* Though in the very heart of the metropolis, it marks the southern limit of the original city. It has two massive round-fronted towers, from each of which rises a lofty and elegant mad'neh, presenting a grand and picturesque effect. The mad'nehs belong to the great mosque of El-Mu-eiyad, which is immediately within the gate, on the left of a person entering. They were built with the mosque, in the year of the Flight 819 (A.D. 1416-17). Before this gate criminals are generally executed. Among the other gates, that called Báb el-Adawee,

* Originally called Zaweeleh. This was the name of an Arab tribe.

in the centre of the north wall, may be mentioned as one of solid construction, but not otherwise remarkable ; also the Báb el-Hadeed, which was built with the third wall.

In my next letter I must describe the interior of the metropolis.

LETTER X.

November, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE already attempted to describe to you my impressions on my first entry into Cairo. My ideas of it, for a considerable time, were very confused ; it seemed to me, for the most part, a labyrinth of ruined and half-ruined houses, of the most singular construction ; and in appearance so old, that I was surprised at being informed that, only a few years ago, it presented a far less unhappy aspect.

Cairo is dignified with the name of Umm-ed-Dunya (the Mother of the World) and other sounding appellations. Though it has much declined since the discovery of the passage to India by the Cape of Good Hope, and more especially of late years, it is still one of the most considerable cities in the East. It is altogether an Arabian city ; and the very finest specimens of Arabian architecture are found within its walls. The private houses are in general moderately large ; the lower part of stone, and the superstructure of brick ; but some are little better than huts.

The streets are unpaved, and very narrow, generally from five to ten feet wide. Some are even less than *four* feet in width ; but there are others as much as forty or fifty feet wide, though not for any great length. I must describe the streets under their different appellations.

A shârë', or great thoroughfare-street, is generally somewhat irregular both in its direction and width. In most parts the width is scarcely more than sufficient for two loaded camels to proceed at a time ; and hence much inconvenience is often occasioned to the passenger, though carriages are very rarely encountered. All burdens are borne by camels, if too heavy for asses ; and vast numbers of the former, as well as many of the latter, are employed in supplying the inhabitants of Cairo with the water of the Nile, which is conveyed in skins, the camel carrying a pair of skin bags, and the ass a goat-skin, tied round at the neck. The great thoroughfare-streets being often half obstructed by these animals, and generally crowded with passengers, some on foot, and others riding, present striking scenes of bustle and confusion, particularly when two long trains of camels happen to meet each other where there is barely room enough for them to pass, which is often the case. Asses are in very general use, and most convenient for riding through such streets as those of Cairo, and are always to be procured for hire. They

are preferred to horses even by some men of the wealthier classes of the Egyptians. Their paces are quick and easy; and the kind of saddle with which they are furnished is a very comfortable seat: it is a broad, parti-coloured pack-saddle. A servant generally runs with the donkey; and exerts himself, by almost incessant bawling, to clear the way for his master. The horseman proceeds with less comfort, and less speed,—seldom beyond the rate of a slow walk; and though preceded by a servant; and sometimes by two servants to clear his way, he is often obliged to turn back: it is, therefore, not often that a numerous cavalcade is seen in the more frequented streets; and there are some streets so contracted that a person on horseback cannot pass through them. It is not uncommon for individuals of the higher and middle classes in Cairo to exchange salutations in the streets, though unacquainted with each other. Thus the Muslim salutation was often given to my brother; a fact which I mention merely to show the fallacy of the opinion that the natives of the East can easily detect, even by a glance, a European in Oriental disguise.

A stranger, with lofty ideas of Eastern magnificence, must be surprised at the number of meanly-dressed persons whom he meets in the streets of Cairo. Blue is the prevailing colour, as the principal article of dress, both of the men and

women of the lower orders, is a full shirt of cotton or linen, dyed with indigo, which is the production of the country. The blue shirts of the men, particularly of the servants, often conceal vests of silk and cloth. Some persons are so poor as not even to possess a ragged turban ; their only head-dress being a close-fitting cap of white, or brown felt, or an old turboosh ;* and many are without shoes. Christians and Jews are distinguished by a black, or blue, or light-brown turban. The costumes of the women, and especially of the ladies, are the most remarkable in the eyes of the European stranger. The elegant dress which they wear at home is concealed whenever they appear in public by a very full silk gown (called *tób*), and a large black silk covering (called *habarah*) enveloping almost the whole person ; or, instead of the latter, in the case of unmarried ladies, a *white* silk covering : the face veil (*burko'*) is of white muslin ; it is narrow, and reaches from the eyes nearly to the feet. Thus encumbered, it is with some difficulty that the ladies shuffle along in their slippers ; but they are seldom seen in the crowded streets on foot : well-trained donkeys are hired for their convenience, and are furnished, for this purpose, with a high and broad saddle, covered with a carpet, upon which the lady sits astride, attended by a

* The red cloth skull-cap, round which the turban is wound.

servant on each side. A long train of ladies, and female slaves attired in the same manner, one behind another, a whole hareem, is often seen thus mounted ; and passengers of all ranks make way for them with the utmost respect. The women of the inferior classes wear a black face veil, which I think much more becoming than the white. It is sometimes adorned with gold coins and beads ; or they draw a part of the head veil before the face, leaving only one eye visible.

Numbers of blind persons are seen in the streets of Cairo ; and many more with a bandage over one eye ; but I seldom see a *woman* with diseased eyes.

Shops, which (I have before remarked) are merely small recesses, and most of which are poorly stocked, generally occupy the front part of the ground-floor of each house in a great street ; and the houses, with few exceptions, are two or three stories high. Their fronts, above the ground-floor, projecting about two feet, and the windows of wooden lattice-work projecting still further, render the streets gloomy, but shady and cool. On either side of the great streets are by-streets and quarters.

A *darb*, or by-street, differs from a *shárē'* in being narrower, and not so long. In most cases, the *darb* is about six or eight feet wide, is a thoroughfare, and has, at each end, a gateway, with a



Shop.

large wooden door, which is always closed at night! Some darbs consist only of private houses ; others contain shops.

A háráh, or quarter, is a particular district consisting of one or more streets or lanes. In general, a small quarter contains only private houses, and has but one entrance, with a wooden gate, which, like that of a darb, is closed at night.

The sooks, or markets, are short streets, or short portions of streets, having shops on either side. In some of them, all the shops are occupied by persons of the same trade. Many sooks are covered overhead by matting, extended upon rafters, resembling those I observed at Alexandria, and some have a roof of wood. Most of the great thoroughfare-streets, and many by-streets, consist wholly, or for the most part, of a succession of sooks.

Many of the kháns of Cairo are similar to the sooks just described ; but in general, a khán consists of shops or magazines surrounding a square or oblong court.

Khán El-Khaleelee, which is situated in the centre of that part which constituted the original city, a little to the east of the main street, and occupies the site of the cemetery of the Fawátim (the Khaleefehs * of Egypt), particularly deserves to be mentioned, being one of the chief marts of

* The bones of the Khaleefehs were thrown on the mounds of rubbish outside the city.

Cairo. It consists of a series of short lanes, with several turnings, and has four entrances from different quarters. The shops in this khán are mostly occupied by Turks, who deal in ready-made clothes and other articles of dress, together with arms of various kinds, the small prayer-carpets used by the Muslims, and other commodities. Public auctions are held there (as in many other markets in Cairo) twice in the week, on Monday and Thursday, on which occasions the khán is so crowded, that, in some parts, it is difficult for a passenger to push his way through. The sale begins early in the morning, and lasts till the noon-prayers. Clothes (old as well as new), shawks, arms, pipes, and a variety of other goods, are offered for sale in this manner by brokers, who carry them up and down the market. Several water-carriers, each with a goat-skin of water on his back, and a brass cup for the use of any one who would drink, attend on these occasions. Sherbet of raisins, and bread (in round, flat cakes), with other eatables, are also cried up and down the market; and on every auction day, several real or pretended idiots, with a distressing number of other beggars, frequent the khán.

Another of the principal kháns of Cairo is that called the Kamzáwee, which is the principal market of the drapers and silk-mercers.

There the few other kháns in Cairo, or rather

few other buildings so designated ; but there are numerous buildings called wekálehs, which are of the same description as most of the kháns, a wekáleh generally consisting of magazines surrounding a square court.

The Wekálet el-Gellábeh (or Wekáleh of the slave-merchants), which is near the Khán El-Kha-lelee, has lately ceased to be the market for black slaves. It surrounds a spacious square court, in which were generally seen several groups of male and female slaves, besmeared with grease (of which they are very fond), and nearly in a state of nudity, excepting in winter, when they were better clad, and kept within doors. As there is a thoroughfare through this wekáleh, the slaves were much exposed to public view. The market for black slaves is now at Káid Bey, which is a city of the dead, comprising a few old habitations for the living, between the metropolis and the neighbouring mountain. The slave-merchants were obliged to transfer their unfortunate captives to this cemetery in the desert in consequence of its having been represented to the governnient that epidemic diseases originated in the slave-market in Cairo. I have not visited them, nor do I intend to do so ; for although slavery in the East is seen under the most favourable circumstances, there is something in it so revolting, that I am not disposed to try my feelings when I can do no good. But I am told

that they appear careless and happy; for their greatest troubles are past, and they know that the slave of the Muslim fares even better than the free servant. Some of the more valuable of the female slaves (as the *white* female slaves, to whom another wekáleh is appropriated) are only shown to those persons who express a desire to become purchasers.

Having now described the streets and markets of Cairo, I may mention some particular quarters, &c. There are some parts which are inhabited exclusively by persons of the same religion or nation. Many quarters are inhabited only by Muslims.*

The quarter of the Jews (*Hárat el-Yahood*) is situated in the western half of that portion of the metropolis which composed the original city. It is very extensive, but close and dirty. Some of its streets, or rather lanes, are so narrow, that two persons can barely pass each other in them; and in some parts, the soil has risen by the accumulation of rubbish a foot or more above the thresholds of the doors....

The Greeks have two quarters, and the Copts have several, of which some are very extensive. The Franks inhabit not only what is called the quarter of the Franks (*Hárat el-Ifreng*), but are interspersed throughout a considerable district, situated between the canal (which runs through the

* About three-fourths of the population of Cairo are native Muslims.

city) and the Ezbekeeyeh, of which latter I shall presently give you a description.

The motley population of the part of the metropolis where most of the Franks reside, gives it the appearance of a quarter in a sea-port town, like Alexandria. Some of the Franks retain their national costume; others adopt partly or wholly the Turkish dress. The chief thoroughfare-street in this part of the town is the market, called the Mooskee, where are a few shops fitted up in the European style, with glass fronts, and occupied by Franks, who deal in various European commodities. The Hárát el-Ifreng is a short street leading out of the Mooskee, on the southern side.

There are several vacant spaces of considerable extent in the interior of the metropolis, some of which, during the season of the inundation (the autumn), become lakes. The principal of these I must here mention.

The great place which bears the name of the Ezbekeeyeh is an irregular tract, the greatest length of which is nearly half a mile, and the greatest breadth about a third of a mile. It is a very favourite resort of mine, as my children are there secure from the many dangers which I fancy surround them in the crowded streets.

On the south are two modern Turkish palaces, with gardens. On the west is a plain wall (part of the wall of the metropolis), and another Turkish

palace, occupying the site of the mansion of the famous Memlook Bey El-Elfee, which became the residence of Napoleon, and of Kleber, who was assassinated in the adjacent garden. On the north side is a Christian quarter, presenting a long row of lofty but neglected houses. During the season of the inundation, the Nile enters this extensive tract by a canal, and the place is partially inundated; the water remains three or four months, after which the ground is sown. It was formerly, during the season of the inundation, one extensive lake, but is now converted into something like a garden, with an agreeable mixture of trees and water. I am told that the place has a much more pleasing appearance when entirely clothed with green, than it had when it was a lake; and so I should imagine, for the water is very turbid.

The Birket el-Feel (or Lake of the Elephant) also receives the water of the Nile, during the season of the inundation. Only a small part of it is open to the public.

There are two small lakes in the western part of the metropolis, and several others in its vicinity. There are also several cemeteries in the eastern part of the town,* and many large gardens. These gardens are chiefly stocked with palm-trees, acacias, sycamores, oranges, limes, pomegranates, &c. Little

* The principal cemeteries are without the town.

arrangement is displayed in them. They have generally one or more sákiyehs, which raise the water for their irrigation from wells.

The canal* (El-Khaleeg) which traverses the metropolis is no ornament to it. In most parts of its course through the town, it is closely hemmed in on each side by the backs of houses ; therefore it cannot be seen, excepting in a few places, by the passengers in the streets. Most of the bridges over it are moreover lined with shops on both sides, so that a person passing over cannot see that he is crossing the canal. The water of the Nile is admitted into the canal in August, and the entrance is closed by a dam of earth not long after the river has begun to subside ; consequently, after three or four months, only stagnant puddles remain in it. While it continues open, boats enter it from the Nile, and pass through the whole length of the metropolis.

Of the public buildings of Cairo, the most interesting certainly are the mosques, the more remarkable of which I have described to you. They are extremely picturesque, and exquisite taste is displayed in the variety and elegance of their mad'nehs or menarets : but the beauty of these and other parts is, in my opinion, much injured by the prevalent fashion of daubing the alternate courses

* This canal is the ancient Ammis Trajanus.

of stone with whitewash and dark-red ochre. The central part of a great mosque is, in general, a square court, which is surrounded by porticoes, the columns of which are, in few cases, uniform; for they are mostly the spoils of ancient temples, as are also the rich marble slabs, &c., which have been employed to decorate the pavements and the lower portions of the inner faces of the walls in many of the mosques.

The domes are beautiful in form, and, in some instances, in their decorations. The pulpits, also, deserve to be mentioned for their elegant forms, and their curious intricate panel-work. The palpit is placed with its back against the wall in which is the niche; is surmounted by a small cupola, and has a flight of steps leading directly (never tortuously nor sideways) up to the little platform which is the station of the preacher. The congregation range themselves in parallel rows upon the matted or carpeted pavement, all facing that side of the mosque in which is the niche. These few general remarks will enable you better to understand the accounts of particular mosques, or to supply some deficiencies in my descriptions.

Many of these buildings are doubtless monuments of sincere piety; but not a few have certainly originated in ways far from creditable to their founders. I passed by one, a handsome building, respecting which I was told the following

anecdote. The founder, on the first occasion of opening his mosque for the ceremonials of the Friday prayers, invited the chief 'Ulama to attend the service, and each of these congratulated him before the congregation, by reciting some tradition of the Prophet, or by some other words of an appropriate nature, excepting one. This man the founder addressed, asking wherefore he was silent. "Hast thou nothing to say," he asked, "befitting this occasion?" The man thus invited readily answered, "Yes. If thou hast built this mosque with money lawfully acquired, and with a good intention, know that God hath built for thee a mansion in Paradise, and great will be thy felicity. But if thou raised this temple by means of wealth unlawfully obtained, by money exacted from the poor by oppression and tyranny, know that there is prepared for thee a place in hell, and evil will be the transit thither." The latter was the case; and within a few hours after he had thus spoken, the only one among the company of 'Ulama who had dared to utter the language of truth on this occasion—to do which, indeed, required no little courage—suddenly died, a victim, as was well known, of poison.

LETTER XI.

Cairo, November, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

BEING extremely anxious to see the interiors of the principal mosques, I was much vexed at finding that it had become very difficult for a Christian to obtain access to them. My brother might, perhaps, have taken us without risk, as he is generally mistaken for a Turk ; but had he done so, we might have been spoken to in some mosque in the Turkish language, in which language we could not have replied ; whereas, if we were conducted by a Caireen, no Turkish ladies were likely to address us, and if any Arab ladies should do so, our Arabic would only induce them to imagine us Turks. At length an old friend of my brother's offered to take me if I would consent to ride after him in the streets and follow him in the mosques, and appear to be, for the time being, the chief lady of his hareem.

It appeared to me that I should commit a breach in etiquette, by consenting thus to displace his wife (for he has *but one*) ; but finding he would not consent to take me on any other terms, and being bent

on gratifying my curiosity, I agreed to submit to his arrangement, and the more readily because his wife expressed, with much politeness, the pleasure she anticipated in contributing to my gratification. I had never seen my kind old conductor but once, and then through the hareem blinds, until the morning arrived for our expedition, when I and my sister-in-law mounted our donkeys, and submitted ourselves to his guidance. He rode first in the procession ; I next ; then followed my sister-in-law ; and lastly, his wife. We endeavoured on several occasions to induce her to take a more distinguished place, but in vain, and therefore came to the conclusion that she must be infinitely better acquainted with Eastern manners than ourselves, and that it would be safer and better not to oppose her. I use the expression safer, because I was fully aware that if we appeared in any respect *un-eastern*, or rather if we did not *look* like Muslims, we should incur the risk of being turned out of any mosque we might enter, and loaded with reproach and insult.

With (I confess) nervous feelings, we stopped at one of the entrances of the mosque of the Hasaneyn, which is generally esteemed the most sacred in Cairo. It was crowded with ladies who were paying their weekly visit to the tomb of El-Hoseyn

I felt that I had rather have been initiated be-

fore entering the *most sacred* mosque, and thought I had been too bold. Never did a submissive wife walk more meekly after her husband than I followed the steps of my governor *pro tempore*. I gained, however, some confidence by remarking the authoritative air he assumed as soon as he had passed the threshold of the mosque; indeed he played his part admirably.

At the threshold all persons remove their shoes, or slippers, the ladies walking, in the mosque, in the yellow morocco socks, or boots, which I have before described to you; and here I must remark on the scrupulous attention which is paid to cleanliness; for the pale yellow morocco is scarcely injured by a whole day spent in perambulating these Muslim sanctuaries. The men generally carry the shoes in the left hand through the mosque, placed sole to sole, and some ladies carry theirs, but we, like many others, preferred leaving them with our servants, for the walking-dress in itself is so exceedingly cumbrous, and requires so much management, that two hands are scarcely sufficient to preserve its proper arrangement.

The mosque of the Hasaneyn,* which is situated to the north of the Azhar, and not far distant, was founded in the year of the Flight 549 (A.D. 1154-5); but has been more than once rebuilt.

* By the Hasaneyn are meant Hasán and Hoseyn, the grandsons of the Prophet.

The present building was erected about 70 years ago. The fore part consists of a handsome hall, or portico, the roof of which is supported by numerous marble columns, and the pavement covered with carpets. Passing through this hall, I found myself in that holy place under which the head of the martyr El-Hoseyn is said to be buried deep below the pavement. It is a lofty square saloon, surmounted by a dome. Over the spot where the sacred relic is buried, is an oblong monument, covered with green silk, with a worked inscription around it. This is enclosed within a high screen of bronze, of open work; around the upper part of which are suspended several specimens of curious and elegant writing. The whole scene was most imposing. The pavements are exquisite; some of virgin-marble, pure and bright with cleanliness, some delicately inlaid: and the whole appearance is so striking, that I am persuaded if a stranger were to visit the shrine of El-Hoseyn *alone*, he would never believe that El-Islam is on the wane.

All the visitors whom I saw passed round the tomb, walking from left to right, touching each corner of the screen with the right hand, and then applying that hand to their lips and forehead, reciting at the same time, but inaudibly, the Fâ't'hah (or opening chapter of the Kurán), a ceremony also observed on visiting *other* tombs. Many were

most devoutly praying; and one woman kissed the screen with a fervour of devotion which interested while it grieved me. For myself, however, I can never think of the shrine of El-Hoseyn without being deeply affected by reflecting upon the pathetic history of that amiable man, in whom were combined, in an eminent degree, so many of the highest Christian virtues.

We next bent our steps to El-Záme el-Azhar (or the splendid mosque*), which is situated, as I have said, to the south of the Hasaneyn, and not far distant, midway between the principal street of the city and the gate called Báb El-Ghureiyib. It is the principal mosque of Cairo, and the *University of the East*; and is also the first, with regard to the period of its foundation, of all the mosques of the city; but it has been so often repaired, and so much enlarged, that it is difficult to ascertain exactly how much of the *original* structure we see in the present state of the mosque. It was founded about nine months after the first wall of the city, in the year of the Flight 359 (A.D. 969-70). Though occupying a space about three hundred feet square, it makes but little show externally; for it is so surrounded by houses, that only its entrances and mad'nehs can be seen from the streets. It has two grand gates, and four

* Some travellers have strangely misinterpreted the name of this building, calling it the "mosque of flowers."

minor entrances. Each of the two former has two doors, and a school-room above, open at the front and back. Every one takes off his shoes before he passes the threshold of the gate, although if he enter the mosque by the principal gate, he has to cross a spacious court before he arrives at the place of prayer. This custom is observed in every mosque. The principal gate is in the centre of the front of the mosque: it is the nearest to the main street of the city. Immediately within this gate are two small mosques; one on either hand. Passing between these, we enter the great court of the Azhar, which is paved with stone, and surrounded by porticoes. The principal portico is that which is opposite this entrance: those on the other three sides of the court are divided into a number of riwâks or apartments for the accommodation of the numerous students who resort to this celebrated university from various and remote countries of Africa, Asia, and Europe, as well as from different parts of Egypt.

These persons, being mostly in indigent circumstances, are supported by the funds of the mosque; each receiving a certain quantity of bread and soup at noon, and in the evening. Many blind paupers are also supported here, and we were much affected by seeing some bent with age, slowly walking through the avenues of columns, knowing from habit every turn and every passage, and looking

like the patriarchs of the assembled multitude. The riwáks are separated from the court, and from each other, by partitions of wood, which unite the columns or pillars. Those on the side in which is the principal entrance are very small, there being only one row of columns on this side; but those on the right and left are spacious halls, containing several rows of columns. There are also some above the ground-floor. Each riwák is for the natives of a particular country, or of a particular province in Egypt; the Egyptian students being of course more numerous than those of any other nation.

In going the round of these apartments, after passing successively among natives of different divisions of Egypt, we find ourselves in the company of people of Mekkeh and El-Medeeneh; then in the midst of Syrians; in another minute among Muslims of central Africa; next amidst Maghár-beh (or natives of northern Africa, west of Egypt); then, with European and Asiatic Turks; and quitting these, we are introduced to Persians, and Muslims of India: we may almost fancy ourselves transported through their respective countries. No sight in Cairo interested me more than the interior of the Azhar; and the many and great obstacles which present themselves when a Christian, and more especially a Christian lady, *wishes to obtain admission into this celebrated*

mosque, make me proud of having enjoyed the privilege of walking leisurely through its extensive porticoes, and observing its heterogeneous students engaged in listening to the lectures of their professors.

To the left of the great court is a smaller one, containing the great tank at which the ablution preparatory to prayer is performed by all those who have not done it before entering the mosque. The great portico is closed by partitions of wood between a row of square pillars, or piers, behind the front row of columns. The partition of the central archway has a wide door ; and some of the other partitions have smaller doors. The great portico is very spacious ; containing eight rows of small marble columns, arranged parallel with the front. That part beyond the fifth row of columns was added by the builder of one of the grand gates, about 70 years ago. The walls are whitewashed : the niche and pulpit are very plain ; and simplicity is the prevailing character of the whole of the interior of the great portico. The pavement is covered with mats ; and a few small carpets are seen here and there.

A person of rank or wealth is generally accompanied by a servant bearing a *seggádeh* (or small prayer carpet, about the size of a hearth-rug), upon which he prays. During the noon-prayers of the congregation on Friday, the worshippers are very

numerous ; and, arranged in parallel rows, they sit upon the matting.

Different scenes at other times are presented in the great portico of the Azhar. We saw many lecturers addressing their circles of attentive listeners, or reading to them commentaries on the Kurán. In most cases these lecturers were leaning against a pillar, and I understand that in general each has his respective column, where his pupils regularly attend him, sitting in the form of a circle on the matted floor. Some persons take their meals in the Azhar, and many houseless paupers pass the night there, for this mosque is left open at all hours. Such customs are not altogether in accordance with the sanctity of the place ; but peculiarly illustrative of the simplicity of Eastern manners.

We next visited the fine mosque of Mohammad Bey, founded in the year of the Flight 1187 (A.D. 1773-4), adjacent to the Azhar. This is remarkable as a very noble structure, of the old style, erected at a late period.

The great mosque of that impious impostor the Khaleefeh *El-Hákim* (who professed to be a prophet, and afterwards to be God incarnate) derives an interest from the name it bears, and from its antiquity. It is situated immediately within that part of the northern wall of the city which connects the Báb en-Nasr and Báb el-Futooh. This

mosque was completed in the reign of El-Hákim, in the year of the Flight 403 (A.D. 1012-13); but was founded by his predecessor. It is now in a state of ruin, and no longer used as a place of worship. It occupies a space about 400 feet square, and consists of arcades surrounding a square court.

124

LETTER XII.

November, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WILL continue the subject I left incomplete in my last. Several of the finest mosques in Cairo front the main street of the city. In proceeding along this street from north to south, the first mosque that particularly attracts notice is the Barkookeeyeh, on the right side.

This is a collegiate mosque, and was founded in the year of the Flight 786 (A.D. 1384-5). It has a fine dome, and a lofty and elegant mad'neh; and the interior is particularly handsome, though in a lamentable state of decay.

A little beyond this, on the same side of the street, are the tomb, mosque, and hospital of the Sultán Kalá-oon, composing one united building. The tomb and mosque form the front part; the former is to the right of the latter; and a passage, which is the general entrance, leads between them to the hospital (Máristán).* These three united buildings were founded in the year of the Flight

* Vulgarly pronounced Muristan.

683 (A.D. 1284-5). The tomb has a very large mad'neh, and is a noble edifice ; its front is coloured red and white, in squares : the interior is very magnificent. The mosque is not remarkable. The hospital contains two small oblong courts, surrounded by small cells, in which mad persons are confined and chained ; men in one court, and women in the other. Though these wretched beings are provided for by the funds of the establishment, it is the custom to take them food, and they ask for it in a manner which is most affecting. But here I must make one consolatory remark : the poor creatures have certainly more than enough to eat, for none seemed hungry, and I observed that one of the men threw down a piece of bread which was given to him.

Judging by my own anxiety to ascertain the real state of the poor lunatics in the Máristán, I cannot describe to you their condition too minutely. Our ears were assailed by the most discordant yells as soon as we entered the passage leading to the cells. We were first conducted into the court appropriated to the men, one of our servants attending us with the provisions. It is surrounded by small cells, in which they are separately confined, and each cell has a small grated window, through which the poor prisoner's chain is fastened to the exterior. Here seemed exhibited every description of insanity. In many cells were those who suf-

ferred from melancholy madness ; in one only I saw a cheerful maniac, and he was amusing some visitors exceedingly by his jocose remarks. Almost all stretched out their arms as far as they could reach, asking for bread, and one poor soul especially interested me by the melancholy tone of his supplication. Their outstretched arms rendered it frequently dangerous to pass their cells, for there is a railing in the midst of the court, surrounding an oblong space, which I imagine has been a tank, but which is now filled with stones ; and this railing so confines the space appropriated to visitors, that one of our party was cautioned by the superintendent when she was not aware she was in arms' length of the lunatics.

I trust that the mildness and gentleness of manner we observed in the keepers were not assumed for the time, and I think they were not, for the lunatics did not appear to fear them. The raving maniacs were strongly chained, and wearing each a collar and hand-cuffs. One poor creature endeavoured, by constantly shaking his chain, to attract pity and attention. They look unlike human beings, and the manner of their confinement, and the barren wretchedness of their cells, contributed to render the scene more like a menagerie than anything else. It is true that this climate lessens the requirements of every grade in society, so that the poor generally sleep upon the bare ground, or upon

thin mats; but it is perfectly barbarous to keep these wretched maniacs without anything but the naked floor on which to rest themselves, weary, as they must be, by constant excitement.

I turned sick at heart from these abodes of wretchedness, and was led towards the court of the women. Little did I expect that scenes infinitely more sad awaited me. No *man* being permitted to enter the part of the building appropriated to the women, the person who had hitherto attended us gave the provision we had brought into the hand of the chief of the female keepers. The maniacs sit within the doors of open cells surrounding their court, and there is no appearance of their being confined. I shrunk as I passed the two first, expecting they would rush out; but being assured that they were chained, I proceeded to look into the cells, one by one. The first lunatic I remarked particularly, was an old and apparently blind woman, who was an object of peculiar interest, from the expression of settled sadness in her countenance. Nothing seemed to move her. A screaming raving maniac was confined in a cell nearly opposite to hers; but either from habit, or the contemplation of her own real and imagined sorrows, the confusion seemed by her perfectly unheeded. The cell next to hers presented to my view a young girl, about sixteen or seventeen years of age, in a perfect state of nudity; she sat in a crouching at-

titude, in statue-like stillness, and in the gloom of her prison she looked like stone. The next poor creature was also young, but older than the preceding, and she merely raised her jet-black eyes and looked at us through her dishevelled hair, not wildly, but calmly and vacantly. She, too, had no article of clothing. I was ill-prepared for the sight of such misery, and I hastily passed the poor squalid, emaciated, raving maniacs, all without any covering; and was leaving the court, when I heard a voice exclaiming, in a melancholy tone of supplication, "Stay, O my mistress, give me five paras for tobacco before you go." I turned, and the entreaty was repeated by a nice-looking old woman, who was very grateful when I assured her she should have what she required. She was clothed, and sitting almost behind the entrance of her cell, and seemed on the look-out for presents. The woman who was the superintendent gave her the trifle for me, and I hope she was permitted to spend it as she desired. She and the first I saw were the only two who were not perfect pictures of misery. If insanity, the most severe of human woes, calls for our tenderest sympathy, the condition of these wretched lunatics in Cairo cries aloud for our deepest commiseration. How their situation can be mended, I know not: the government alone can interfere, and the government does not.

We were informed that the establishment was

endowed with remarkable liberality. It is, and always has been, a hospital for the sick, as well as a place of confinement for the insane; and originally, for the entertainment of those patients who were troubled with restlessness, a band of musicians and a number of storytellers were in constant attendance.

The friend who conducted us related some anecdotes of the poor maniacs, to which I listened with interest. The first, I am told, has been related by some European traveller, in a work descriptive of the Egyptians; but as I do not know by whom, and you may not have read or heard it, I will give you that as well as the others.

A butcher, who had been confined some time in the Máristán, conceived an excessive hatred for a Delee (a Turkish trooper), one of his fellow-prisoners. He received his provision of food from his family, and he induced his wife one day, on the occasion of her taking him his dinner, to conceal, in the basket of food, the instruments he had used in his trade, viz., a cleaver, a knife, and a pair of hooks. I must here observe, that those lunatics who do not appear dangerous have lighter chains than others, and the chains of the person in question were of this description. When he had taken his meal, he proceeded to liberate himself; and as the cells communicated by the back, he soon reached that of his nearest neighbour, who, de-

lighted to see him free, exclaimed, "How is this? Who cut your chains?" "I did," replied the first, "and here are my implements." "Excellent," rejoined the other, "cut mine too." "Certainly," said he; and he proceeded to liberate not only one, but two, three, and four of his fellow-prisoners. Now follows the tragical part of the story. No keepers were present—the man who possessed the cleaver attacked the poor Delee, chained and unarmed as he was; slaughtered him; and after dividing his body, hung it on the hooks within the window of the cell, and believed himself to be—what he was—a butcher.

In a few minutes the liberated lunatics became uproarious; and one of them growing alarmed, forced open the door by which the keepers usually entered, found one of them, and gave the alarm. The keeper instantly proceeded to the cell, and seeing the body of the murdered man, exclaimed,

"What, have you succeeded in killing that Delee? he was the plague of my life." "I have," answered the delinquent; "and here he hangs for sale." "Most excellent," replied the keeper, "but do not let him hang here; it will disgrace us: let us bury him." "Where?" asked the maniac, still holding his cleaver in his hand. "Here in the cell," replied the other, "and then the fact can never be discovered." In an instant he threw down his cleaver, and began to dig busily with his

hands. In the mean time, the keeper entered by the back of the cell, and throwing a collar over his neck, instantly chained him and so finished this tragedy.

Some time since, the brother of the person who gave the following anecdote, on the occasion of his visiting the Máristán, was accosted by one of the maniacs by name, and greeted with the usual salutations, followed by a melancholy entreaty that he would deliver him from that place. On examining him particularly, he found him to be an old friend; and he was distressed by his entreaties to procure for him his liberation, and perplexed what to do. The lunatic assured him he was not insane, and at length the visitor resolved on applying for his release. Accordingly, he addressed himself to the head keeper on the subject, stated that he was much surprised by the conversation of the patient, and concluded by requesting his liberation. The keeper answered that he did appear sane at that time, but that perhaps in an hour he might be raving.

The visitor, by no means satisfied by the reply of the keeper, and overcome by the rational arguments of the lunatic, urged his request, and at length he consented, saying, "Well, you can try him." This being arranged, in a short time the two friends set out together; and, engaged in conversation, they passed along the street, when suddenly the maniac seized the other by the throat, ex-

claiming, "Help, O Muslims! here is a madman escaped from the Máristán." He wisely suffered himself to be dragged back in no gentle manner to the very cell whence he had released the poor lunatic; and the latter, on entering, called loudly for a collar and chain for a maniac he had found in the street, escaped from the Máristán. The keeper immediately brought the collar and chain; and while pretending to obey his orders, slipped it over his neck; and secured him in his former quarters, I need not say, to the satisfaction of his would-be deliverer.

Our conductor also related, that some years ago, a maniac, having escaped from his cell in the Máristán, when the keepers had retired for the night, ascended the lofty mad'neh of the adjoining sepulchral mosque, the tomb of the Sultán Kala'oon. Finding there, in the gallery, a Muëddin, chanting one of the night-calls, uttering, with the utmost power of his voice, the exclamation "Yá Rabb!" (O Lord!) he seized him by the neck. The terrified Muëddin cried out, "I seek God's protection from the accursed devil! God is most great!"—"I am not a devil," said the madman, "to be destroyed by the words, 'God is most great!'" (Here I should tell you that these words are commonly believed to have the effect here ascribed to them, that of destroying a devil.) "Then what art thou?" said the Muëddin. "I am a madman,"

answered the other, "escaped from the Máristán." "O welcome!" rejoined the Muëddin: "praise be to God for thy safety! come, sit down, and amuse me with thy conversation." So the madman thus began: "Why do you call out so loud, 'O Lord!' Do you not know that God can hear you as well if you speak low?" "True," said the other, "but I call that men also may hear." "Sing," rejoined the lunatic; "*that* will please me." And upon this, the other commenced a kind of chant, with the ridiculous nature of which he so astonished some servants of the Máristán, who, as usual, were sitting up in a coffee-shop below, that they suspected some strange event had happened, and hastily coming up, secured the madman.

After what I have told you of the miserable creatures at present confined in the Máristán, I am very happy to add, that their condition will, I believe, in a few weeks, be greatly ameliorated. They are, I have since heard, to be removed to an hospital, where they will be under the superintendence of a celebrated French surgeon, Clot Bey.

I now return to the subject of the mosques.

Proceeding still southwards along the main street, we arrived at a fine mosque, called the Ashrafeeyeh, on the right. It was built by the Sultán El-Ashraf Barsabáy, consequently between the

years 825-41 (A.D. 1421 *et seq.*). Frequently criminals are hanged against one of the grated windows of this mosque; as the street before it is generally very much crowded with passengers.

Still proceeding along the main street, through that part of it called the Ghóreeyeh (which is a large bázár, or market), we arrive at the two fine mosques of the Sultán El-Ghóree, facing each other, one on each side of the street, and having a roof of wood extending from one to the other. They were both completed in the year of the Flight 909 (A.D. 1503-4). That on the left, El-Ghóree designed as his tomb; but he was not buried in it.

Arriving at the southernmost part of the main street, we have on our right the great mosque of the Sultán El-Mu-eiyad, which was founded in the year of the Flight 819 (A.D. 1416-17). It surrounds a spacious square court, and contains the remains of its royal founder, and of some of his family. It has a noble dome, and a fine lofty entrance-porch at the right extremity of the front. Its two great mad'nehs, which rise from the towers of the gate called Báb-Zuweyleh (the southern gate of that portion of the metropolis which constituted the old city), I have already mentioned.

Of the mosques in the *suburban* districts of the

metropolis, the most remarkable are those of the Sultán Hasan and of Ibn-Tooloon, or, as the name is commonly pronounced, Teyloon.

The great mosque of the Sultán Hasan, which is situated near the citadel, and is the most lofty of the edifices of Cairo, was founded in the year of the Flight 757 (A.D. 1356). It is a very noble pile; but it has some irregularities which are displeasing to the eye; as, for instance, the disparity of its two mad'nehs. The great mad'neh is nearly three hundred feet in height, measured from the ground. At the right extremity of the north-east side of the mosque is a very fine lofty entrance-porch. From this, a zigzag passage conducts us to a square hypæthral hall, or court, in the centre of which is a tank, and near this, a reservoir with spouts, for the performance of ablution; each crowned with a cupola. On each of the four sides of the court is a hall with an arched roof and open front. That opposite the entrance is the largest, and is the principal place of worship. Its arched roof is about seventy feet in width. It is constructed of brick and plastered (as are the other three arches), and numerous small glass lamps, and two lanterns of bronze, are suspended from it. The lower part of the end wall is lined with coloured marbles. Beyond it is a square saloon, over which is the great dome, and in the centre of this saloon is the tomb of the royal founder. Most of the decora-

tions of this mosque are very elaborate and elegant, but the building, in many parts, needs repair.

The great mosque of Ibn-Tooloon (or, as it is more commonly called, Gámē' Teyloon), situated in the southern part of the metropolis, is a very interesting building. It was founded in the year of the Flight 263 (A.D. 876-7), and was the principal mosque of the city El-Katāë, a city nearly a century older than El-Káhireh. The space which it occupies is about 400 feet square. It is constructed of brick, covered with plaster, and consists of arcades surrounding a square court; in the centre of which is a tank for ablution, under a square stone building, surmounted by a dome. The arches in this mosque are slightly pointed: this is very remarkable, as it proves, as the mosque was constructed A.D. 876-7, and has never been rebuilt, that the Eastern pointed arch is more ancient than the Gothic. This remark I borrow from my brother's manuscript notes. A great mad'neh, with winding stairs round its exterior, stands on the north-west side of the mosque; with which it is only connected by an arched gateway. The whole of this great mosque is in a sad state of decay; and not even kept decently clean, excepting where the mats are spread. It is the most ancient Arabian building, excepting the Nilometer of Er-Ródah (which is about 12 years older), now

existing in Egypt: for the mosque of 'Amr, though founded more than two centuries before, has often been rebuilt.

In the neighbourhood of the mosque above described is a large ruined castle or palace, called Kal'at el-Kebsh (or the Castle of the Ram*), occupying, and partly surrounding, an extensive rocky eminence. It was built in the middle of the seventh century after the Flight (or the thirteenth of our era). Its interior is occupied by modern buildings.†

The mosques of the seyyideh Zeyneb, the seyyideh Sekeeneh, and the seyyideh Nefeeseh (the first and second situated in the southern part of the metropolis, and the third in a small southern suburb without the gates) are highly venerated; but not very remarkable buildings.‡ There are many other mosques in Cairo well worthy of examination; but those which I have mentioned are the most distinguished.

* Kebsh not only signifies a *ram*, but is also the name of the mountain sheep (both male and female) which is found in the deserts adjacent to Egypt.

† A few years ago, much remained of its principal gateway, which, I am told, had a noble appearance, being very lofty, and of a simple style of architecture.

‡ The seyyideh Zeyneb was the daughter of Imám 'Alee, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet; Sekeeneh was the daughter of Hoseyn, the son of 'Alee; and Nefeeseh was the great-granddaughter of Hasan, the son of 'Alee.

I have been surprised at my having visited the most sacred of the mosques of Cairo without exciting the smallest suspicion of my being a Christian. A few days ago a party of Englishmen were refused admission into the Hasaneyn. They were conducted by a janissary of the Páshá, and he was exceedingly enraged against the officers of the mosque. They seized him, however, and drew him into the mosque, and closing the doors and windows, detained him, shutting out his party; but the interpreter of the Englishmen, being a Mualim, obtained admission by a back door, and liberated the prisoner.

There are, in Cairo, many public buildings, besides the mosques, which attract attention. Among these are several Tekeeyehs, or convents for Darweeshes and others, mostly built by Turkish Páshás, for the benefit of their countrymen. Some of these are very handsome structures.

Many of the Sebeels (or public fountains) are also remarkable buildings. The general style of a large sebel may be thus described. The principal part of the front is of a semicircular form, with three windows of brass grating. Within each window is a trough of water; and when any one would drink, he puts his hand through one of the lowest apertures of the grating, and dips in the trough a brass mug, which is chained to one of the bars. Above the windows is a wide coping of

wood. Over this part of the building is a public schoolroom, with an open front, formed of pillars and arches; and at the top is another wide coping of wood. Some of these buildings are partly constructed of alternate courses of black and white marble.

Hôds, or watering-places for beasts of burden, are also very numerous in Cairo. The trough is of stone, and generally in an arched recess, over which is a public schoolroom.

There are, as my brother has remarked, about sixty or seventy Hammâms, or public baths, in Cairo. Some are exclusively for men, some only for women: others, for men in the morning, and for women in the afternoon. When the bath is appropriated to women, a piece of white cotton is hung over the door. The apartments are paved with marble, have fountains and tanks, and are surmounted by cupolas, pierced with small round holes for the admission of light.

The last of the buildings I shall mention are the Kahwehs, or coffee-shops, of which Cairo contains above a thousand. Only coffee is supplied at these; the persons who frequent them taking their own pipes and tobacco.

LETTER XIII.

December, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

FROM the city, you must now accompany me, in imagination, to the citadel. If you could do so in reality, you would be amply repaid for the trouble of ascending its steep acclivities ; not by the sight of any very remarkable object within its walls, but by gazing on one of the most striking and interesting views in the Eastern world. The citadel (El-Kat'ah) is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the metropolis, upon an extensive, flat-topped, rocky eminence, about 250 feet above the level of the plain, and near the point of Mount Mukattam, which completely commands it. It was founded by Salâh-ed-Deen (the famous Saladin), in the year of the Flight 572 (A.D. 1176-7); but not finished till 604; since which latter period it has been the usual residence of the sultâns and governors of Egypt. Before it is a spacious square, called the Rumeyleh, where a market is held, and where conjurers, musicians, and storytellers are often seen, each surrounded by a ring of idlers.

The Bâb el-'Azab is the principal gate of the

citadel. Within this is a steep and narrow road, partly cut through the rock; so steep, that in some parts steps are cut to render the ascent and descent less difficult than it would otherwise be for the horses and camels, &c. This confined road was the chief scene of the massacre of the Memlooks in the year 1811. I may perhaps have something to say, on a future occasion, respecting that tragedy.

A great part of the interior of the citadel is obstructed by ruins and rubbish, and there are many dwelling-houses and some shops within it. The most remarkable monument that it contains is a great mosque, built by the Sultán Ibn-Kala'-oon, in the early part of the eighth century after the Flight (or the fourteenth of our era). It is in a ruinous state, and no longer used as a place of worship. It consists of porticoes, surrounding a square court.

On the north-west of this mosque, stood, about twelve or thirteen years ago, a noble ruin—an old palace, commonly called Kasr Yoosuf, or Deewán Yoosuf, and believed to have been the palace of Yoosuf Saláh-ed-Deen; but erroneously. European travellers adopted the same opinion, and called it "Joseph's Hall." My brother informs me, on the authority of El-Makreezee, that this noble structure was built by the prince before-mentioned.*

* The Sultán Ibn-Kala'-oon.

Huge ancient columns of granite were employed in its construction; their capitals of various kinds, and ill-wrought, but the shafts very fine. It had a large dome, which had fallen some time before the ruin was taken down. On entering it was observed, in the centre of the south-eastern side, a niche, marking the direction of Mekkeh, like that of a mosque, which in other respects this building did not much resemble. Both within and without are remains of Arabic inscriptions, in large letters of wood; but of which many had fallen long before its demolition.

A little to the west of the site of the old palace were the remains of a very massive building, called "the house of Yoosuf Salâh-ed-Deen," partly on the brow, and partly on the declivity of the hill. From this spot, on the edge of the hill, we have a most remarkable view of the metropolis and its environs. Its numerous mad'nehs and domes, its flat-topped houses, with the sloping sheds which serve as ventilators, and a few palms and other trees among the houses, give it an appearance quite unlike that of any European city. Beyond the metropolis we see the Nile, intersecting a verdant plain; with the towns of Boolâk, Masr Ateekah, and El-Geezeh; on the south, the aqueduct, and the mounds of rubbish which occupy the site of El-Fustât, and in the distance, all the pyramids of Memphis, and the palm groves on the site of that

city. On the north of the metropolis are seen the plains of Heliopolis and Goshen. No one with a spark of feeling can look unmoved on such a prospect : the physical sight has enough to charm it ; but the deepest interest is felt while, in gazing on this scene, the mind's eye runs rapidly over the historic pages of the Word of God.. The oppression and the deliverance of the tribes of Israel, and the miracles which marked that deliverance, all these events are overwhelmingly present to the memory; while looking on the scenes they have consecrated—their subsequent prosperity, disobedience, and punishment, all pass in melancholy review. O ! that the power of Almighty God may be present with those who labour for their restoration, and "may they at length," as Mr. Wilberforce beautifully expresses his petition on their behalf, "may they at length acknowledge their long-neglected Saviour." Well have they been described as "tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast." Often "houseless, homeless, and proscribed," they endure every indignity and become inured to every hardship ; but the eye of God is still upon them, and his ear is open to their prayers. How true it is that hitherto "they will not turn to Him that they might receive mercy," but they are not forsaken ; and while we hear with thankfulness of the zeal of many from among their own people in the

cause of Christianity, we trust that the day is not far off when, rather than

“Weep for those who wept by Babel’s stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream,”

we shall rejoice in the prospect of that blessed time when the Lord God shall “give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;” when all nations of the earth shall “rejoice with Jerusalem, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.”

Adjacent to the Kasr Yoosuf is a very large mosque, not yet completed; a costly structure, with a profusion of alabaster columns; but of a mixed style of architecture, which I cannot much admire, though the effect of the building, when it is finished, will certainly be grand. I need hardly add, that the founder of this sumptuous edifice is Mohammad 'Alee, by whose name it is to be called.

The famous well of Yoosuf Salâh-ed-Deen, so called because it was excavated in the reign of that Sultân, is near the southern angle of the old great mosque. It is entirely cut in the calcareous rock, and consists of two rectangular shafts, one below the other; with a winding stairway round each to the bottom. In descending the first shaft

my heart and limbs failed me, and I contented myself with seeing as much as I could through the large apertures between the stairs and the well. Our guide bore a most picturesque aspect ; she was a young girl, and if I might judge by her beautiful dark eyes, her countenance must have been lovely. She held a lighted taper in each hand, and stepped backwards before us, down the dark and (in my opinion) dangerous descent. Accustomed to the winding way, she continued fearlessly through the gloom, while her light and graceful figure receded slowly, and the glimmer of her tapers shone on the damp rock on either side, and made the darkness seem intense.

The upper shaft is about 155 feet deep, and the lower about 125 ; therefore the whole depth of the well is about 280 feet. The water, which is rather brackish, is raised by a *sakiyah* at the top of each shaft.

There are several large edifices in the modern Turkish style, worthy in this country of being called palaces, in the southern quarter of the citadel, and in the quarter of the Janisaries, which did not form a part of the *old* citadel, and which lies to the east of the latter. Some of the walls, together with many houses, on the northern slope of the hill, were overthrown by the explosion of a magazine of powder, in the year 1824. On the

western slope of the hill is an arsenal, with a cannon-foundry, &c.

Mount Mukattam overlooks both the town and citadel of Cairo; and is composed of a yellowish calcareous rock, abounding with testaceous fossils: it is entirely destitute of verdure. Upon its flat summit, a strong fort has been erected, with a steep causeway, upon high narrow arches ascending to it. On each side of this causeway, the rock has been extensively quarried. On the western side of the mountain are many ancient sepulchral grottoes; but they are difficult of access, and I do not propose visiting them. My brother has seen them, and he could find no traces of hieroglyphics, or other decorations, in any of them.

On the north of the metropolis are many gardens, and, in the season of the inundation, many lakes, in one of which (Birket er Ratlee) abundance of lotus plants are seen in blossom in the month of September. In the same tract is a ruined mosque, which was founded by Ez-Záhir Beyburs, in the year of the Flight 665 (A.D. 1266-7). The French converted it into a fort.

Opposite the Báb en-Nasr is a large cemetery, occupying a desert tract; and here is the tomb of the lamented Burckhardt.

The great Eastern cemetery, in the sandy waste between the metropolis and the mountain, contains

the tombs of many of the Mémlook Sultans. Some of these 'mausolea' (which have been erroneously regarded by some travellers as the tombs of the Khaleefehs) are very noble buildings; particularly those of the Sultans Barkook,* and Káid-Bey,† or Kaitbey. None of the tombs of the Khaleefehs of Egypt now exist: Khán el-Khaleelee (as I have mentioned in a former letter) occupies their site. The central part of this cemetery contains several alms-houses, and is commonly called Káid-Bey. Here, and for some distance towards the citadel, the tombs are closely crowded together, and the whole cemetery, being intersected by roads, like streets in a town, may justly be called a Necropolis; or City of the Dead. All the tract is desert; and few persons are to be met here, excepting on the Friday morning, when it is the custom of the Muslims to visit the tombs of their relations and friends. Numerous groups of women are then seen repairing to the cemetery; each bearing a palm-branch, to lay upon the tomb she is about to visit.

On the south of the metropolis is another great cemetery, called El-Karáfeh, still more extensive, but not containing such grand mausolea. This, also, is in a desert plain. Many of its tombs are

* Built by his son and successor Fárag, in the beginning of the ninth century after the Flight, or the fifteenth of our era.

† Built about a century after the former.

very beautiful : one kind is particularly elegant, consisting of an oblong monument, generally of marble, canopied by a cupola, or by a pyramidal roof, supported by marble columns. In the southern part of this cemetery is the tomb of the celebrated Imám Esh-Sháfe'ee, the founder of one of the four orthodox sects of El-Islám, that sect to which the people of Cairo chiefly belong. This Imám died in the year of the Flight 204 (A.D. 819-20). The present mosque which covers his tomb is a plain whitewashed building, with a dome cased with lead. This mosque has been twice rebuilt, the present being the third building, and about two centuries and a half old. A little to the north of it is a low building, which is the burial-place of the present Páshá's family. Between this cemetery and the mountain are many ancient mummy-pits choked with rubbish. They evidently show that this tract was the Necropolis of Egyptian Babylon.

Along the western side of the metropolis are several lakes and gardens. The most remarkable of the latter are those of Ibraheem Páshá ; but these I might more properly call plantations. I have mentioned them in a former letter. A great portion of the tract they occupy was, a few years ago, covered by extensive mounds of rubbish, which, though not so large nor so lofty as those on the east and south, concealed much of the town from the view of persons approaching it in this

direction. All the camels, asses, &c., that die in the metropolis are cast upon the surrounding hills of rubbish, where hungry dogs and vultures feed on them.

On the bank of the river, between Boolák and Masr el-'Ateekah, are several palaces, or mansions, among which is one belonging to Ibraheem Páshá, besides a large square building called Kasr El-'Eyné (which is an establishment for the education of youths destined for the service of the government); and a small convent of Darweeshes. A little to the south of these buildings is the entrance of the khaleeg, or canal of Cairo; and just above this commences the aqueduct by which the water of the Nile is conveyed to the Citadel. A large hexagonal building, about sixty or seventy feet high, contains the sákiyehs which raise the water to the channel of the aqueduct. The whole length of the aqueduct is about two miles. It is built of stone; and consists of a series of narrow arches, very gradually decreasing in height, as the ground has a slight ascent, imperceptible to the eye. The water, towards the end of its course, enters a subterranean channel, and is raised from a well in the Citadel. This aqueduct was built (in the place of a former one of wood) in the early part of the tenth century after the Flight (or the sixteenth of our era). To the south of the aqueduct lies the town of Masr

el-'Ateekah, the principal houses of which face the river, and the island of Er-Ródah.

This island (the name of which signifies the Island of the Garden) is about a mile and three-quarters in length, and a third of a mile in breadth. The branch of the river on its eastern side is very narrow; and when the Nile is at its lowest point, the bed of this narrow branch becomes nearly dry. The island contains several pleasure-houses and gardens, and the palm, the orange, the lime, the citron, the pomegranate, the vine, the sycamore (which affords a deep and broad shade), and the banana, form a luxuriant variety. The banana is especially beautiful; its long leaves spreading and drooping from the summit of the stem, like the branches of the palm-tree. On this verdant island we find also the henna-tree, so much esteemed by the women of this country for the dye afforded by its leaves, and so justly valued by persons of all countries for the delicious perfume which its flowers exhale. But the great charm of Er-Ródah is a garden belonging to Ibraheem Páshá, under the able superintendence of Mr. Traill, who has rendered it the most attractive thing of its kind in the neighbourhood of Cairo.

Masr el-'Ateekah, though more than a mile in length, is a small straggling town, lying along the bank of the Nile, and occupying a part of the site

of El-Fustát. Many of the vessels from Upper Egypt unload there; and a constant intercourse is kept up, by means of numerous ferry-boats, between this town and El-Geezeh. Behind the town are extensive low mounds of rubbish, covering the rest of the site of El-Fustát. In this desolate tract are situated the Mosque of 'Amr, the Kasr esh-Shema, and several Christian convents.

The Mosque of 'Amr has been so often repaired and rebuilt, that almost every part of it may now be regarded as modern: yet there is something very imposing in the associations connected with this building, where the conqueror of Egypt, surrounded by "companions of the Prophet," so often prayed.

The building occupies a space about 350 feet square; its plan is a square court, surrounded by porticos, and its whole appearance very simple and plain. The exterior is formed by high bare walls of brick. The portico at the end of the court towards Mekkeh has six rows of columns; that on the left side, four rows; that on the right, three; and on the entrance side only one row. The columns are of veined marble; some, being too small, have an additional plinth, or an inverted capital, at the base. The capitals are of many different kinds, having been taken, as also the columns, from various ancient buildings.

The Kasr esh-Shema is an old Roman fortress,

which was the stronghold of Egyptian Babylon, and the head-quarters of the Greek army, which the Arabs, under 'Amr, contended with and vanquished. It is said that this building was, in ancient times, illuminated with candles on the first night of every month ; and hence it derived the name it now bears, which signifies "the pavilion of the candles." The area which it occupies extends about a thousand feet from north to south, and six or seven hundred feet from east to west. Its walls are very lofty, constructed of brick with several courses of stone, and strengthened by round towers. The interior is crowded with houses and shops, occupied by Christians, and it contains several churches ; among which is that of St. Sergius, where a small grotto, somewhat resembling an oven, is shown as the retreat of the Holy Family. The Egyptian Babylon was situated on a rocky eminence, on the south-east of the Kasr esh-Shema. El-Makreezee and other Arab historians prove that this was the Masr which 'Amr besieged and took. There was another fortress here, besides the Kasr esh-Shema, called the Kasr Bábelyoon (or the pavilion of Babylon). This, I am told, was the spacious square building since called Istabl 'Antar (or the stable of Antar), which in later times became a convent, and is now converted into a powder-magazine. To the west of the hill of Babylon, and close to the Nile, is the small village

of Atar em-Nebee ; so called from a stone, bearing the impression of the Prophet's foot, preserved in a small mosque, which rises, with a picturesque effect, from the verge of the river.

El-Geezeh, which is opposite to Masr el-Ateekah, is a small poor town, surrounded, excepting on the side towards the river, by a mean wall, which would scarcely avail to defend it from a party of Bedawees. It has been supposed to occupy a part of the site of Memphis ; but this conjecture is known to be erroneous.

I must mention also a few places north of the metropolis. A fine straight road, bordered by mulberry-trees, sycamores, and acacias, leads to Shubra, the favourite country residence of the Páshá, rather more than three miles from Cairo. The palace of Shubra is situated by the Nile. Its exterior is picturesque, especially as viewed from the river, and it has an extensive garden laid out with much taste.

About six miles distant from the northern gates of the metropolis, towards the north-north-east, is the site of Heliopolis, the City of the Sun, called by the Egyptians, "On ;" and by the Arabs, "Eyn-Shems," or, "the fountain of the sun ;" though, to bear this signification, the name should, I am told, be written "Eyn esh-Shems," which may also be interpreted, "the rays, or light of the sun." The route from Cairo to the site of Heliopolis lies

along the desert ; but near the limits of the cultivable soil. This part of the desert is a sandy flat, strewed with pebbles, and with petrified wood, pudding-stone, red sandstone, &c. A small mountain of red sandstone, called "El-Gebel el-Ahmar" (or "the red mountain"), lies at a short distance to the right, or east. On approaching within a mile of the site of Heliopolis, the traveller passes by the village of El-Matareeyeh, where are pointed out an old sycamore, under the shade of which (according to tradition), the Holy Family reposed, and a well which afforded them drink. The balsam-tree was formerly cultivated in the neighbouring fields : it thrived nowhere else in Egypt ; and it was believed that it flourished in this part because it was watered from the neighbouring well. The name given by the Arabs to Heliopolis was perhaps derived from this well. In a space above half a mile square, surrounded by walls of crude brick, which now appear like ridges of earth, were situated the sacred edifices of Heliopolis. The only remaining monument appearing above the soil is a fine obelisk, standing in the midst of the enclosure. The Arabs call it "the obelisk of Pharaoh." It is formed of a single block of red granite, about sixty-two feet in height, and six feet square at the lower part. The soil has risen four or five feet above its base ; for, in the season of the inundation, the water of the Nile enters the enclosure by a

branch of the canal of Cairo. Upon each of its sides is sculptured the same hieroglyphic inscription, bearing the name of Osirses the First, who reigned not very long after the age when the pyramids were constructed. There are a few other monuments of his time: the obelisk of the Fer-yoo'm is one of them. 'Abd El-Lateef, in speaking of Eyn-Shems, says that he saw there (about the end of the twelfth century of the Christian era) the remains of several colossal statues, and *two* great obelisks, one of which had fallen, and was broken in two pieces. These statues, and the broken obelisk, probably now lie beneath the accumulated soil.

Such are the poor remains of Heliopolis, that celebrated seat of learning, where Eudoxus and Plato studied thirteen years, and where Herodotus derived much of his information respecting Egypt. In the time of Strabo, the city was altogether deserted; but the famous temple of the sun still remained, though much injured by Cambyses. The bull Mevis was worshipped at Heliopolis, as Apis was at Memphis. It is probable that the "land of Goshen" was immediately adjacent to the province of Heliopolis, on the north-north-east.

Thirteen miles from Cairo, in the same direction as Heliopolis, is the village of El-Khankeh, once a large town, and long the camp of the regular troops. El-Khankeh is two miles to the north of

the Lake of the Pilgrims, which is so called because the pilgrims collect and encamp by it before they proceed in a body to Mekkeh. This lake is more than two miles in length, from west to east, and a mile in breadth. It is filled by the canal of Cairo during the season of the inundation.

LETTER XIV.

December, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You must bear with me if I recur to the subject of the haunted house, for our disturbances came to a sort of climax which I think as curious as it was exciting, and so strikingly characteristic, that I must describe to you the particulars of the case.

Ramadán ended about a month ago, and with it ended the comparative quiet of our nights. To describe to you all the various noises by which we have been disturbed is impossible. Very frequently the door of the room in which we were sitting late in the evening, within two or three hours of midnight, was violently knocked at many short intervals: at other times, it seemed as if something very heavy fell upon the pavement close under one of the windows of the same room, or of one adjoining, and as these rooms were on the top of the house, we imagined at first that some stones or other things had been thrown by a neighbour, but we could find nothing outside after the noises

I have mentioned. The usual noises continued during the greater part of the night, and were generally like a heavy trampling, like the walking of a person in large clogs, varied by knocking at the doors of many of the apartments, and at the large water-jars which are placed in recesses in the galleries. Our maids have come and gone like shadows ever since our residence here, excepting during Ramadán, and *sauve qui peut* seems to have been their maxim ; for they believe that one touch of an 'efreet' would render them démoniacs.

A few evenings since, a maid, who had only passed two days in the house, rushed to our usual sitting room, whence she had just removed our supper; exclaiming that a tall figure in white had stood with arms outspread at the entrance of the upper gallery to prevent her passing. We all immediately returned with her, and as you will anticipate, found nothing. This white figure our servants call a saint, and they assert that the house is haunted by a saint and an 'efreet'. One man assures us that this same saint, who is, to use his expression, "of dazzling whiteness," applied himself, one night, to the bucket of the well in the court, and, having drawn up water, performed his ablutions and said his prayers. Frightening servant maids is rather inconsistent, I ween, with such conduct. Certainly the servants do not complain

without reason, and it is particularly grievous, because there is not, throughout the whole healthful part of the city, one comfortable house vacant.

During Ramadán, the Muslims believe that 'efreets are imprisoned, and thus our servants accounted for our freedom from annoyance during that month. We on the other hand believed we had bolted and barred out the offender, by having discovered his place of ingress, and were much disappointed at finding our precautions useless.

A few days since, our doorkeeper (a new servant), complained that he not only could not sleep, but that he *never had* slept since his arrival more than a few minutes at a time, and that he never could sleep consistently with his duty, unless the 'efreet should be destroyed. He added, that he came up every night into the upper gallery leading to our sleeping rooms, and there he found the figure I have mentioned, walking round and round the gallery; and concluded with an anxious request that my brother would consent to his firing at the phantom, saying that devils have always been destroyed by the discharge of fire-arms. My brother consented to the proposal, provided the servant used neither ball nor small shot. Two days and nights passed, and we found on the third, that the doorkeeper was waiting to ascertain whether the spectre were a saint or a devil, and had

therefore resolved to question him on the ensuing night before he fired.

The night came, and it was one of unusual darkness. We had really forgotten our man's intention, although we were talking over the subject of the disturbances until nearly midnight, and speculating upon the cause, in the room where my children were happily sleeping, when we were startled by a tremendous discharge, which was succeeded by the deep hoarse voice of the door-keeper, exclaiming "There he lies, the accursed!" and a sound as of a creature struggling and gasping for breath. In the next moment, the man loudly called his fellow servant, crying, "Come up, the accursed is struck down before me!"—and this was followed by such mysterious sounds that we believed either a man had been shot, and was in his last agonies, or that our man had accidentally shot himself.

My brother went round the gallery, while I and my sister-in-law stood like children trembling hand in hand, and my boys mercifully slept (as young ones do sleep), sweetly and soundly through all the confusion and distress. It appeared that the man used not only ball-cartridge, but put two charges of powder, with two balls, into his pistol. I will describe the event, however, in his own words. "The 'efreet passed me in the gallery

and repassed me, when I thus addressed it. ‘Shall we quit this house, or will you do so?’ ‘You shall quit it,’ he answered ; and passing me again, he threw dust into my right eye. This proved he was a devil,” continued the man ; “and I wrapped my cloak around me, and watched the spectre as it receded. It stopped in that corner, and I observed attentively its appearance. It was tall and perfectly white. I stooped, and before it moved again, discharged my pistol, which I had before concealed, and the accursed was struck down before me, and here are the remains.” So saying, he picked up a small burnt mass, which my brother showed us afterwards, resembling more the sole of a shoe than anything else, but perforated by fire in several places, and literally burnt to a cinder. This, the man asserted (agreeably with a popular opinion), was always the relic when a devil was destroyed, and it lay on the ground under a part of the wall where the bullets had entered.

The noise which succeeded the report, and which filled me with horror, is, and must ever remain, a mystery. On the following morning we closely examined the spot, and found nothing that could throw light on the subject. The burnt remains do not help us to a conclusion ; one thing, however, I cannot but believe—that some one

who had personated the devil, one suffered some injury, and that the darkness favoured his escape. It is truly very ridiculous in these people to believe that the remains of a devil resemble the sole of an old shoe. It reminds me of the condensed spirits of whom we read in the "Thousand and One Nights," who were (so say tradition) bottled up, hermetically sealed, and thrown into the sea, by order of Suleyman the son of Da-ood.

I need scarcely say that the servant was reprimanded for disobeying his orders with regard to charging the pistol. With this one exception, he has proved ever obedient, most respectful, and excellent in every point. I really believe the man was so worn out by want of sleep, and exasperated by finding the same figure nightly pacing round the galleries, and preventing his rest, that he became desperate.

You will remember the story, in the "Thousand and One Nights," of the revenge threatened by an 'Efreet on a merchant, for having unconsciously slain his son by throwing a date-stone, which occasioned a mortal wound. The fear of unknowingly injuring an 'Efreet and incurring his resentment is as strong as ever in the minds of these people. They always say "Destoor" (permission) when about to step down from any elevated place, or

when they see another person going to do so. A poor little boy fell on his face the other day near our house, and hurt himself certainly, but before he cried, he exclaimed, "Destoor!" I suppose concluding that if he had fallen on an 'Efreet unwittingly, the asking permission after the fact might cancel the offence ; and having done so he was satisfied, and cried heartily.

LETTER XV.

Cairo, February, 1833.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You know how much I desired to obtain access to respectable hareems, as well those of the highest as those of the middle classes ; and now that my hope has been realized, I find that I did not desire what would disappoint my expectations. Indeed I have felt exceedingly interested in observing the manners of the ladies of this country ; in some cases I have been amused by their familiarity, and in many fascinated by the natural grace of their deportment. I am aware that by description I cannot do them justice, but I will endeavour to give you faithful pictures of those hareems I have already seen ; and first I must tell you that I am indebted exceedingly to the kindness of Mrs. Sieder, the lady of our excellent resident missionary, who has gained the confidence of the most distinguished hareems in this country, and has given me some introductions I particularly desired, without any reserve, and in the most ready and friendly



A Turkish Lady in the ordinary dress worn in an Egyptian Harem.

manner. Among the ladies to whom she has introduced me are those of Habeeb Eféndee, the late governor of Cairo ; and in relating to you the particulars of my first visit to them, I give you an account of my initiation into the mysteries of the high hareems.

I had been some time in Cairo before I dared to mount the "high ass;" for their appearance is really formidable. I adopted the plan followed by many ladies here, that of a prayer-carpet spread on a common saddle ; but in visiting the *high* hareems, it became necessary to ride the *high* ass ; and I found it infinitely more agreeable than my usual donkey's equipment. Certainly I was obliged constantly to stoop my head under the gateways, and came nearly in contact with some projecting first-floor windows ; therefore I found it necessary to be on the alert ; but setting aside these objections, there is no comparison to be made between the "high ass" and the ordinary donkeys—the former is so decidedly preferable.

When we arrived at the house of Habeeb Eféndee, and had passed the outer entrance, I found that the hareem apartments, as in other houses of the great in this country, are not confined to the first and upper floors, but form a separate and complete house, distinct from that of the men. Having passed a spacious hall, paved with marble, we were

met at the door of the first apartment by the elder daughter of Habeeb Efendee, who gave me the usual Eastern salutation, touching her lips and forehead with her right hand, and then insisted on removing my riding-dress herself, although surrounded by slaves. This was a mark of extraordinary condescension, as you will presently see. In the houses of the middle classes, the ladies generally honour their visitors by disrobing them of their riding-dress ; but in the high hareems this office is generally performed by slaves, and only by a member of the family when a guest is especially distinguished.

In visiting those who are considered the noble of the land, I resume, under my Eastern riding costume, my English dress ; thus avoiding the necessity of subjecting myself to any humiliation. In the Turkish in-door costume, the manner of my salutations must have been more submissive than I should have liked ; while, as an Englishwoman, I am entertained by the most distinguished, not only as an equal, but generally as a superior. I have never given more than the usual salutation, excepting in the case of addressing elderly ladies, when my inclination leads me to distinguish them by respectfully bending, and lowering my right hand before I touch my lips and forehead, when I am presented, and when I leave them. On receiv-

ing sweetmeats, coffee, sherbet, or any refreshment, and on returning the cup, plate, &c., which contain them, I give always the customary salutation to the chief lady of the hareem, whose situation on the divan points her out as the superior of the party.

At home, and when visiting ladies of the middle class, I wear the Turkish dress, which is delightfully comfortable, being admirably adapted to the climate of this country. I have never gone out but in the Eastern riding-dress, which I have already described to you.

When the lady I have mentioned had removed my surtout apparel, a slave in attendance received them in an exquisite pink kerchief of cashmere, richly embroidered with gold. The kerchiefs of this kind, in the hareems of the wealthy, are generally very elegant, but that was the most perfect specimen I have seen of correct and tasteful embroidery. The riding-dress was immediately taken into another room, according to a usual custom, which is observed for the purpose of creating a short delay, giving an opportunity to offer some additional refreshment when the guest has proposed to take her leave. My new acquaintance then conducted me to the divan, and placed me next to the seat of honour, which was reserved for her mother, the first cousin of the late Sultan Mahmoud,

who soon entered the room, and gave me a cordial welcome, assigning to me the most distinguished seat on her right hand, the same to which her daughter had conducted me, while the grandmother of Abbas Pasha sat on her left. She was soon followed by her second daughter, who greeted me with much politeness, and in a very elegant manner assured me that I was welcome. She was more richly attired than her sister; therefore I will describe to you her dress.

She wore on her head a dark handkerchief twisted round a tarboosh, with a very splendid sprig of diamonds attached to the right side, and extending partly over her forehead. The sprig was composed of very large brilliants, disposed in the form of three lutes, in the centre, from each of which a branch extended, forming an oval shape, at least five inches in length. High on the left side of her head she wore a knot or slide of diamonds, through which was drawn a bunch of ringlets, which, from their position, appeared to be artificial; her tarboosh had the usual blue silk tassel, but this was divided and hanging on either side. Her long vest and trowsers were of a dark flowered India fabric; she wore round her waist a large and rich cashmere shawl; and her neck was decorated with many strings of very large pearls, confined at intervals by gold beads. She was

in one respect strangely disfigured ; her eyebrows being painted with kohl, and united by the black pigment in a very broad and most unbecoming manner. Many women of all classes here assume this disguise : some apply the kohl to the eyebrows as well as to the eyes, with great delicacy ; but the lady in question had her eyebrows so remarkable, that her other features were deprived of their natural expression and effect.

A number of white slaves formed a large semi-circle before us, and received from others, who waited in the ante-chamber, silver trays, containing glass dishes of sweetmeats. There were three spoons in each dish, and two pieces of sweetmeat in each spoon. These were immediately succeeded by coffee, which was also brought on silver trays ; the small china cups being, as usual, in stands, shaped like egg-cups ; but these were not, as in ordinary houses, simply of silver filagree, or plain, but decorated with diamonds. They were certainly elegant, but more costly than beautiful. The coffee is never handed on the tray, but gracefully presented by the attendant, holding the little stand between the thumb and finger of the right hand. After these refreshments a short time elapsed, when two slaves brought in sherbet on silver waiters, in exceedingly elegant cut-glass cups,

with saucers and covers. Each tray was covered with a round pink richly-embroidered cover, which the slave removed as she approached us. To receive our cups, of the contents of which, according to custom, we drank about two-thirds, another slave approached, with a large white embroidered kerchief, ostensibly for the purpose of wiping the mouth ; but any lady would be thought quite a novice who did more than touch it with her lips.

In the course of conversation, I expressed my admiration of the Turkish language, and, to my surprise, the elder of the young ladies gave me a general invitation, and proposed to become my instructress : addressing herself to Mrs. Sieder with the most affectionate familiarity, she said, "O my sister, persuade your friend to come to me frequently, that I may teach her Turkish ; in doing which, I shall learn her language, and we can read and write together." I thanked her for her very polite offer, but made no promise that I would become her pupil ; foreseeing that it would lead to a very considerable waste of time. In all the hareeins I have visited, Arabic is understood and spoken ; so I do not expect any advantage from a knowledge of Turkish, unless I could devote to its study considerable attention.

The perfect good humour and cheerfulness which

pervaded this family-circle is well worthy of remark, and much engaged my thoughts during the morning of my visit. All that I observed of the manners of the Eastern women, at Habeeb Efendi's and elsewhere, leads me to consider the perfect contrast which the customs of Eastern life present to the whole construction of European society. If you have read Mr. Urquhart's 'Spirit of the East,' you have felt interested in his view of the life of the hareem, and have thought that the Eastern "home" which he represents in such a pleasing manner possesses considerable attractions. Believe me, there is much to fascinate and much to interest the mind in observing peculiarities in these people which have no parallel in the West; and I could furnish a letter on contrasts nearly as curious as Mr. Urquhart's.

How extraordinary it seems that girls, until they are given away in marriage, see only persons of their own sex, with the exception of a few very near male relations, and then receive as their future lord and master one with whom no previous acquaintance has been possible! This is so revolting to the mind of an Englishwoman, that the mere consideration of such a system (which indeed, I am told, is beyond what the rigour of the law requires) is intolerable; therefore I must observe, and admire all that is admirable, and endeavour to

forget what is so objectionable in the 'state' of Eastern society.

Before our departure it was proposed that I should see their house ; and the elder daughter threw her arm round my neck, and thus led me through a magnificent room which was surrounded by divans ; the elevated portion of the floor was covered with India matting, and in the middle of the depressed portion was the most tasteful fountain I have seen in Egypt, exquisitely inlaid with black, red, and white marble. The ceiling was a beautiful specimen of highly-wrought arabesque work, and the walls as usual white-washed, and perfectly plain, with the exception of the lower portions, which, to the height of about six feet, were cased with Dutch tiles.

I was conducted up stairs in the same manner ; and I could not help feeling exceedingly amused at my situation ; and considering that these ladies are of the royal family of Turkey, you will see that I was most remarkably honoured.

When we approached the bath, we entered the reclining room, which was furnished with divans, and presented a most comfortable appearance ; but the heat and vapour were so extremely oppressive in the region of the bath, that we merely looked into it, and gladly returned to the cool gallery. I am not surprised that you are curious on the sub-

ject of the bath and the Eastern manner of using it; and I hope to devote a future letter to a description of the operation (for such indeed it may be styled), and the place in which that operation is performed.

On our reaching the stairs, the second daughter of Habeeb Efendee took her sister's place; and with her arm round my neck, we descended the stairs, and re-entered the room where I had received so kind a reception. When we rose to take our leave, the elder daughter received my riding-dress from a slave, and was about to attire me, when her sister said, " You took them off; it is for me to put them on." The elder lady partly consented, retaining the habarah, and thus they dressed me together. Then, after giving me the usual salutation, they each cordially pressed my hand, and kissed my cheek. We then descended into the court, attended by the ladies, and a crowd of white slaves. Having crossed the court, we arrived at the great gate, through which I had before passed, which was only closed by a large mat, suspended before it, forming the curtain of the hareem. This mat was raised by black eunuchs, who poured from a passage without, and immediately after the ladies bade us farewell, and returned, followed by their slaves. The principal eunuch ascended first the mounting platform, and placed me on the donkey, while two others ar-

ranged my feet in the stirrups; our own servants being kept in the background.

A few days after this visit, I received a second invitation from this hareem, with the polite assurance that they intended making a festival and fantasia for my amusement.

LETTER XVI.

March, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I DOUBT whether I shall be bold enough to attempt anything like a description of the present political state of this country ; but I shall here offer you a sketch of its past history, from the period of its conquest by the Arabs, which, I hope, will interest. For this purpose, I shall draw freely from my brother's manuscript notes.

In the 20th year of the Flight (A.D. 640-41), Egypt was conquered by the Arabs ; and since that period, it has continued to be subject to Muslim rulers. It has been governed by Arab vice-roys, and by Turkish independent princes ; by Arab khaleefehs ; by a dynasty of Kurds ; by Turkish and by Circassian Sultáns, who, in their youth, were Memlooks (or slaves) : it has been annexed to the great Turkish empire, and governed by Turkish pashas, in conjunction with Memlooks ; has become a prey to the Memlooks alone ; been conquered by the French ; wrested from them by the English, and restored to the Turks : it has been a scene of sanguinary contention between the

Turks and Memlooks; and is now again solely under a Turkish ruler. Of these various revolutions I shall give a short account.

During the space of nearly two centuries and a half the authority of the khaleefehs was maintained in Egypt by viceroys whom they appointed, and who were frequently changed. The first of these viceroys was 'Amr Ibn-el-'A's, the conqueror of the country. The history of their times, transmitted to us by Arab writers, contains, as far as it relates to Egypt, little that is worthy of mention. On the occasion of the overthrow of the dynasty of the Ummaweyeh (or khaleefehs of the race of Umeiyeh), the seat of whose empire was Damascus, there ensued no change in the form of government to which Egypt had been subject; but the town of El-'Askar was then founded, and became the residence of the successive viceroys appointed by the new dynasty of the 'Abbaseyeh (or khaleefehs descended from El-'Abbás, an uncle of the Prophet), who changed the seat of the Arabian empire to Baghdád.

At the close of the period above mentioned, the empire of the Khaleefehs of Baghdád had begun to decline: those princes had no longer sufficient power to overawe their lieutenants in distant provinces. The viceroy of the greater part of Northern Africa had already set the example of rebellion against the successor of the Prophet, and had

secured his independence ; and now, at the close of the year of the Flight 269 (A.D. 883), the governor of Egypt, actuated by motives of self-defence, rather than ambition, threw off his allegiance to his sovereign, the Khaleefeh El-Moata-mid, and rendered himself absolute master not only of Egypt, but also of Syria, after having governed the former country as viceroy during the space of fifteen years. This prince was Ahmad Ibn-Tooloon (commonly called Ibn Teyloon), the founder of the noble city of El-Katāë (which he made the seat of his government), and of the grand mosque which is called by his name, and which remains a proud monument of his reign. He was the son of a Turkish slave, who had been promoted to a high office in the court of Baghdád. Though he became the independent sovereign of Egypt, the Khaleefeh continued to be acknowledged, in that country, as the head of the religion ; and, as such, was still named in the public Friday-prayers in the mosques. Four independent princes of the same family succeeded Ibn Tooloon ; and thus, during rather more than twenty-two years, the khaleefehs of Baghdád remained deprived of one of the finest provinces of their wide empire. The dynasty of the Benee-Tooloon was overthrown in the year of the Flight 292 (A.D. 905) by Mohammad Ibn-Suleymán, who, at the head of a numerous army, set fire to El-Katāë, plundered

El-Fustát, and re-established the supreme authority of the khaleefehs in Egypt.

At the expiration of about thirty years after that period, the great Arabian Empire began to be dismembered on every side. In the year 323 (A.D. 935) a Ta'ta'r, or Turk, named **Mohammad El-Ikhsheed** (or **El-Akhsheed**), succeeded, for the second time, to the government of Egypt, and soon after acquired the sole dominion of that country and of Syria. The latter was wrested from him; but it again became subject to his authority. This prince was the founder of the dynasty of Ikhsheedeeyeh (or Akhsheedeeyeh), the second and third of whom were his sons; the fourth was a black eunuch, surnamed Káfoor, whom he had purchased and emancipated. On the death of this eunuch, a dispute arose respecting the succession; and though a grandson of the founder of the dynasty was proclaimed, and acknowledged by many, still the general voice seemed to be against him. This was in the year of the Flight 358 (A.D. 968-9). Of this crisis advantage was taken by El-Mo'ezz, the fourth of the Fawátim (or khaleefehs of the race of Fátimah), who ruled over the greater part of Northern Africa. The Fawátim had succeeded the dynasty of Beni-l-Aghlab, founded by Ibráheem Ibn El-Aghlab, who, having been appointed governor of *Africa Proper* by the Khaleefeh Hároon Er-

Rasheed, rendered himself an absolute prince. Immediately upon hearing of the distracted state of affairs in Egypt, El-Mo'ezz sent thither a numerous army, and secured to himself, without the least opposition, the possession of that country. The city of El-Káhireh, or Cairo, which his general Góhar founded, became the residence of El-Mo'ezz and his successors. The title of "khaleefeh," as applied to a Muslim sovereign, signifies the legitimate successor of the Prophet, and, consequently, the head of the Muslim religion : the Fawátim, therefore, by assuming that title, excluded the princes of the race of El-'Abbás from the honour of being prayed for in the mosques of Egypt, considering that as their own prerogative. The period of their sway was most eventful : it was most remarkable for the horrid impiety and tyranny of El-Hákim, the seven years' famine in the reign of El-Mustansir (a wise and prudent prince, who reigned sixty years), and the burning of El-Fustát, under El-'A'did, the last of the Fawátim. This dynasty, which consisted of eleven khaleefehs (besides the three predecessors of El-Mo'ezz), lasted until the year of the Flight 567 (A.D. 1171).

The Fawátim were succeeded by the Eiyoobee-yeah, or sultáns of the race of Eiyooob, who were a Kurd family. The first of these was the renowned Saláh-ed-Deen (the Saladin of European historians).

He had been sent by Noor-ed-Deen, Sultán of Syria, with an army commanded by his uncle Sherkooh, to assist El-'A'did, the last of the Fawátim, against the crusaders, who had taken the town of Bilbeys, and laid siege to El-Káhireh ; El-Fustát having been burned (as before mentioned) to prevent its falling into their hands : the invaders, however, accepted a sum of money to raise the siege, and evacuated the country before the arrival of the troops which Sherkooh and Saláh-ed-Deen accompanied. These two chiefs were most honourably received by El-'A'did, who, soon after their arrival, appointed the former of them his prime-minister ; but Sherkooh died only two months and five days after his promotion ; and the office he had enjoyed during that short period was conferred upon Saláh-ed-Deen, who requited his benefactor with ingratitude. In the year above mentioned (567), while El-'A'did was suffering from a fatal illness, Saláh-ed-Deen, urged by his former sovereign (the Sultán of Syria), ordered that the Khaleefeh of Baghdád should be prayed for in the mosques of El-Káhireh, to the exclusion of El-'A'did, who died that year, ignorant of this act of his minister. Immediately after his death, Saláh-ed-Deen caused himself to be proclaimed Sultán of Egypt. The title of Khaleefeh he did not presume to take, not being descended from any branch of the family of the *Prophet* : he therefore continued to acknowledge

the Khaleefeh of Baghdád as the head of the religion. To secure his independence he had to contend with many difficulties ; but his energetic mind, and personal bravery, aided by the possession of vast treasures amassed by the Fawátim, enabled him to overcome every obstacle. Soon after his assumption of royalty, he had to quell an insurrection raised by the adherents of the family of Fátiméh. The Sultán of Syria, while meditating the invasion of Egypt, died in that same year ; and Saláh-ed-Deen subsequently added Syria to his former dominions ; whence resulted his frequent conflicts with the crusaders, which spread his fame over Europe. The apprehension of insurrections or invasions induced him to build the Citadel and third wall of El-Káhireh ; but the wars in which he afterwards engaged were those of conquest rather than defence. There were eight princes of his dynasty, which lasted eighty-one years and a few days : several of them rendered themselves memorable by their exploits against the crusaders. Syria was under princes of the same family, descendants of Saláh-ed-Deen.

To the dynasty of the Eiyooobeeyeh succeeded that of the Turkish or Turkomán Memlook Sultáns, also called the Bahree Memlooks.* Nearly a thousand of this class of Memlooks had been

* The term Memlook is generally restricted to a white slave, particularly a military slave.

purchased by El-Melik Es-Saleh Negm-ed-Deen, the last but one of the sultans of the race of Eiyob : they resided in his palace on the island of Er-Rodah ; and hence they received the appellation of "the Bahree Memlooks;"* the word Bahree, in this case, signifying "of the river." After having been instructed in military exercises, these slaves constituted a formidable body, whose power soon became uncontrollable. A very beautiful female slave, called Sheger-ed-Durr (or the tree of pearls), of the same race as these Memlooks, was the favourite wife of Negm-ed-Deen. This prince died at El-Mansoorah, whither he had gone to protect his kingdom from the crusaders, who, under Louis IX., had taken Damietta. Toorán Sháh succeeded his father Negm-ed-Deen on the throne of Egypt,† but reigned only seventy days : he was put to death by the Memlooks, to whom he had rendered himself obnoxious ; as he had also to Sheger-ed-Durr, who was an instigator of his death. Under this sultan, the French invaders of Egypt suffered a signal defeat, and Louis himself was taken prisoner. Sheger-ed-Durr caused herself to be proclaimed queen of Egypt, with the

* El-Makreezee.

† D'Herbelot and some other European writers have fallen into an error in saying that Sheger-ed-Durr was the mother of Toorán Sháh. She bore to Negm-ed-Deen one son, who died in infancy.

concurrence, and through the influence, of the Memlooks ; and thus commenced, with a female, the dynasty of the Bahreeyeh, in the year of the Flight 648 (A.D. 1250) ; but this queen was soon obliged to abdicate, and one of the Bahree Memlooks, 'Ezz-ed-Deen Eybek Et-Turkamánee, was raised to the throne, with the surname of El-Melik El-Mo'ezz. Sheger-ed-Durr became his wife ; but being slighted by him on account of her age, she caused him to be put to death, after he had reigned nearly seven years. His successor, who was his son by another wife, delivered this infamous woman, Sheger-ed-Durr, into the hands of his mother, who, together with her female slaves, beat her to death with their wooden clogs, or pattens ; her body was stripped naked, and thrown outside the walls of the citadel, whence, after some days, it was taken, and buried in a tomb which had been constructed for her by her own order. Syria, as well as Egypt, was under the government of the sultáns of this dynasty ; it was several times wrested from them, but promptly regained. The dynasty of the Bahreeyeh consisted of the queen above-mentioned, and twenty-four sultáns ; and lasted, according to El-Makreezee, one hundred and thirty-six years, seven months, and nine days. Several of these Memlook sultáns (as El-Melik Ez-Zahir Beybars, Kala-oon, Mohammad Ibn-Kala-oon, and some others) are celebrated for their conquests, and for

the noble mosques and other public edifices which they founded. Few of them died a natural death; many were deposed, or banished, or imprisoned; and a still greater number were victims of assassination. It is remarkable that the first of their dynasty was a woman, and the last a boy only six years of age.

The Bahree Sultáns increased the number of the Memlooks in Egypt by the purchase of Circassian slaves, who, in process of time, acquired the ascendancy. During the short reign of the child El-Melik Es-Sáleh Hajjee, the last of the Bakree-yeah, a chief of the Circassian Memlooks, named Barkook, was regent. In the year of the Flight 784 (A.D. 1382) the latter usurped the throne, and with him commenced the dynasty of Circassian Memlooks, also called the Burjee Memlooks, which name was given to them because the Sultán Kalaoon had purchased a considerable number of this tribe of slaves (three thousand seven hundred), and placed them, as garrisons, in the towers of the citadel: * the word burg signifies a tower. Syria continued subject to the Burjee sultáns. This dynasty consisted of twenty-three sultáns, and continued one hundred and thirty-eight years and a half. Ez-Yahir-Barkook, El-Mu-eiyad, Káid Bey, and El-Ghórre may be mentioned as the most

* El-Makreezee.

renowned of these princes : their splendid mosques and mausolea, as well as their military exploits, or private virtues, have kept up the remembrance of their names. Many of the sultáns of this dynasty were deposed, and several voluntarily abdicated ; but nearly all of them died a natural death.

The conquest of Egypt by the Turks, under the Sultán Seleem, in the year of the Flight 923 (A.D. 1517), put an end to the dynasty of the Burjee sultáns. El-Ghóree, the last but one of those princes, was defeated in a dreadful engagement with the army of Seleem, near Aleppo, and was rode over by his own troops. His successor, Too-mán Bey, offered an ineffectual opposition to the invading army of Turks in the neighbourhood of his capital : he was hanged (or, according to some authors, crucified) at the Báb Zuweyleh, one of the gates of Cairo. A different form of government, in which the Memlooks were allowed to share, was now established. Egypt was divided into four and twenty provinces ; each of which was placed under the military jurisdiction of a Memlook Bey ; and the twenty-four beys were subject to the authority of a Turkish páshá, a general governor, appointed by the sultán. Other members of the new administration were seven Turkish chiefs, the generals of seven military corps, called in Turkish Ojákees, and by the Egyptians Ogaklees, or Wugaklees : these composed the páshá's

council. One of the beys was styled Sheykh el-Beled, or Governor of the Metropolis; and this chief enjoyed a higher rank than any of the other beys, among whom, consequently, there were seldom wanting some whose ambition rendered them his secret or avowed enemies. By means of intrigue, or by the sword, or the poisoned cup, the office of Sheykh el-Beled was generally obtained. The Memlooks who thus shared, with the Turkish pâshás, the government of Egypt, were commonly called collectively El-Ghuzz, that being the proper name of the tribe to which most of them belonged.* They despised marrying Egyptian women, preferring females of their own or other more northern countries; but few of them had children; for most of the foreign females in Egypt are sterile, or have weak, sickly children, who die in early age. Such being the case, the Memlooks were obliged continually to recruit their numbers with newly purchased slaves from the same countries. Most of them, when first brought to Egypt, were mere boys, unable to wield the sabre; purchased by a bey, or other great officer, they served, for a while, as pages: those who were handsome were sure to be great favourites of their master; and every favourite who (after having been in-

* The Egyptians, in speaking of the times of the Memlooks who governed Egypt after its conquest by the Turks, say "*In the days of the Ghuzz such an event happened.*"

structed in military exercises) displayed remarkable courage, fidelity, and other good qualities, was emancipated, and promoted to some high office: perhaps he became a káshif, and soon after, a bey. Thus it often happened that several beys owed their advancement to one and the same patron, to whose interests they generally remained devotedly attached. Each bey was constantly intent upon multiplying his Memlooks; and frequent arbitrary exactions from the peasants of the province under his command were the base means which enabled him to accomplish this object. During nearly two centuries after the conquest of Egypt by the Sultán Seleem, the authority of each successive páshá was, with few exceptions, respected by the beys; but the latter, by degrees, obtained the ascendancy; and, after the period above-mentioned, few of the páshás possessed any influence over the Sheykh el-Beled, and the other beys. Egypt thus became subject to a military oligarchy; and the condition of its inhabitants was rendered yet more miserable by frequent sanguinary conflicts between different parties of the Ghuzz. Such was the state of the country when it was invaded by the French; of whose government, in general, the people of Egypt speak in terms of commendation, though they execrate them for particular acts of oppression. After the expulsion of the French, Egypt

remained in a very disturbed state, in consequence of the contentions between the beys and the Turkish pashás, until the power of the former was completely annihilated by Mohammad 'Alee, the present ruler.

END OF VOL. I.



—

—

—

K N I G H T'S
W E E K L Y V O L U M E.

THE
ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT.
VOL. II.



THE
ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT:

LETTERS FROM CAIRO,

WRITTEN DURING A RESIDENCE THERE IN 1842, 3, & 4,

WITH

E. W. LANE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF 'THE MODERN EGYPTIANS.'

BY HIS SISTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO.,
LUDGATE-STREET.

1844.

I. 682

1881, Dec. 31
Minot fund.

C O N T E N T S.

LETTER XVII.

The 'haunted house'—Climate of Egypt—State of the poor
—Respect paid to the mother of a family—The wife
—Preparation of food and manner of eating—Eastern
etiquette—Dinner arrangements—Sacredness of the
hareem, and respect paid to females—Usage of marrying
without having seen the future wife . Pages 9-20

LETTER XVIII.

Treatment of slaves in Egypt—Dancing and singing—In-
fluence and power of wives among the higher classes,
and tyranny of husbands among the lower classes—
Employments of females in the hareem—Beauty of the
embroidery executed by them—Can seldom read and
write pp. 21-31

LETTER XIX.

Plague in Egypt—Means used to ascertain whether the dis-
ease be contagious or not—Enforcement of quarantine—
Egypt visited by pestilence, murrain, and locusts—Ex-
travagance of marriage festivities—Fondness of the
Egyptians for gardens and water—Extreme heat
pp. 32-39

LETTER XX.

Distress exhibited by the females of the hareem of a Turk-
ish grandee, in consequence of his imprisonment

Fear of the 'evil eye'—Interest which the ladies of the hareem take in politics—Courteous manners of the chief ladies, and dress and ornaments worn by them—Large serpent—Serpent-charmers—Intended repairs of Cairo—An instance of pretended death and burial

pp. 40-51

LETTER XXI.

Visit to the hareem of Mohammad 'Alee—Decorations of the rooms and splendour of the furniture—Reception by the wives of the pâshâ—Dinner, dinner-arrangements, and courtesy displayed by the chief ladies—Number of beautiful women in the hareem of Mohammad 'Alee—Description of the dress worn by the Turkish ladies in Egypt pp. 52-64

LETTER XXII.

Etiquette of the hareems as to order and precedence—Arrangement of the apartments, and door-keepers—Facility of admission to the houses of grandees, as distinct from the hareems—Turkish etiquette and French politeness—Organization of the hareems—Modesty of the females—Prejudices against Christianity—Maternal tenderness, and superstition of the 'evil eye'—Uncouth dresses worn by the females in winter—Climate in winter, and storm of thunder and rain . . . pp. 67-80

LETTER XXIII.

Visit to the eldest daughter of Mohammad 'Alee—Affability of the reception, company present, and general ceremonial of visiting—Her Highness's pipes—Bridal processions among the middle classes—Ignominious punishment of four lawyers—Circumstances connected with the early marriage of females . . . pp. 81-93

LETTER XXIV.

Treatment of females in the hareems—Cruelty practised by the middle and lower orders—Missionary Society in Cairo—Instances of cruel treatment of wives, children, and slaves—Muslim ceremonies with respect to the dead, hired mourners, &c.—Cemeteries and tombs—Tombs of the family of Mohammad 'Alee pp. 94-106

LETTER XXV.

Visit to the pyramids—Approach to the pyramids, and inadequate idea of their dimensions—Tombs occupied as dwellings—Circumstances connected with Mr. Lane's visit to the pyramids in 1825—Guards and attendants at the present visit—Description of the Great Pyramid—Dr. Lipsius's account of the mode of construction—Present state of the exterior of the Great Pyramid—View from the top—Dangers to which visitors to the pyramids are exposed pp. 107-129

LETTER XXVI.

Description of the interior of the Great Pyramid—Opinions concerning it pp. 130-148

LETTER XXVII.

Description of the Second Pyramid—The Third Pyramid—Other pyramids—The Great Sphinx—Bedawees
pp. 149-161

LETTER XXVIII.

Performances of the celebrated magician of the city of Cairo
pp. 162-170

LETTER XXIX.

- Description of the baths for females in the city of Cairo—
 Arrangement of the apartments, and appearance of the
 females—Operations of the bath . . pp. 171-175

LETTER XXX.

- Wives of Mohammad 'Alee—Visit to his hareem in the
 citadel—Apartments and reception—Ceremony on quitt-
 ing this hareem—Visit to the hareem of Habeeb Effen-
 dee—Courteous behaviour of his wife and daughters,
 and political conversation with them—Mrs. Damer's
 'Tour' pp. 176-183

- NOTE BY THE EDITOR p. 184

APPENDIX A.

- Magic, from Mr. Lane's 'Modern Egyptians' pp. 185-194

APPENDIX B.

- Female Ornaments, from Mr. Lane's 'Modern Egyptians'
 pp. 195-212

APPENDIX C.

- Account of Mohammad 'Alee, and of the Government of
 Egypt pp. 213-240

THE
ENGLISHWOMAN IN EGYPT.

LETTER XVII.

April, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will congratulate us on our having quitted “the haunted house;” and you will do so heartily when I tell you that six families have succeeded each other in it, in as many weeks, since our departure. The sixth family was about to quit immediately when we heard this news; five having been driven out by most obstinate persecutions, not only during the nights, but in broad daylight, of so violent a description, that the windows were all broken in a large upper chamber, our favourite room. The sixth family suffered similar annoyances, and also complained that much of their china was demolished. Like ourselves, no one has been able to obtain quiet rest in that house,

or rather I should say, others have been in a worse state than ourselves, for we obtained some relief in consequence of our doorkeeper's achievement. And now I hope I have done with this subject. I have said much upon it, but I must be held excusable, as "'tis passing strange."

Our present house is extremely commodious, and much taste and judgment have been displayed in its construction. The terrace is extensive and very picturesque, and the upper rooms are well situated. Most of the rooms are furnished with glass windows, and the house altogether, being exceedingly well built, is adapted for affording warmth in the winter, and proving a cool summer residence.

With regard to a sojourn in Egypt, it is not an easy matter to give you the *pour et contre*. Of one thing I am convinced, that persons must remain a year in this country, that is, they must go the round of the seasons, or nearly so, before they can fully judge of the comforts it offers. I well remember the extreme annoyance I experienced, for some months after our arrival, from the unusually prolonged heat, of which I complained to you, and from the flies and mosquitoes, which were really and constantly distressing ; and I could scarcely believe what people told me, namely, that I should soon find myself very well contented with the climate of the country. As to the mosquitoes, *they interfere so much with enjoyment, that a tra-*

veller who visits Egypt only during the great heat may assert, with truth, that he has no comfort by day, nor by night until he enters his curtain. I confess that I often feared we could not remain here as long as I wished. No sooner, however, did the Nile subside, than my hopes revived ; and finding that the most charming temperature imaginable succeeded the heat, I began to understand what travellers mean when they call this a delicious climate. November is a sweet month here—December and January are rather too cold, taking into consideration that there are neither fire-places nor chimneys in any of the houses, excepting in the kitchens. February and March are perfectly delightful, the temperature then being almost as mild as that of summer in England. During April there occur some instances of hot wind, otherwise it is an agreeable month. In May the hot winds are trying, and then follow four months of oppressive heat.

Devoted as I am, justly, to my own dear country and her blessed associations, I can give you my candid opinion, without any fear that I shall be suspected of preferring a residence in the Levant to my English home, and will show you, without reserve, in what consist the fascinations of this part of the East ;—in the climate, in the manners of the people, and in the simplicity of their habits, which not only attract my admiration, but render me

much less affected by their general poverty than I am by less distress in my own country. It is very certain that if a daily journal were published in Cairo, we should not see paragraphs headed "death by starvation," "distressing case," &c.; but why is it? for there are no houses here for the reception of the poor, as in England. It results from the contented spirit of the poor, if provided simply with bread and water; and, more than all, from the sort of family union which subsists throughout the East, and which literally teaches the poor to "bear each other's burthens." In visiting the middle and higher classes of society, the same family compact is observable, and the mother of the family continues always the mother and the head; her gentle reign lasting with her valued life, and the love and respect of those around her increasing with her years. It is asserted, that when Mohammed was asked what relation had the strongest claim on affection and respect, he replied with warmth, "The mother! the mother! the mother!"

All blood relations in the East take precedence of the wife, who is received into a family as a younger sister. It could scarcely be suffered here, or in Turkey, that a father or mother should quit a house to make way for a son's wife. This you will remember is remarked in Mr. Urquhart's 'Spirit of the East,' and let me ask you, is not *this as it should be?* I cannot understand how

any person with a spark of nature in his breast could allow a beloved parent to resign what a child should be willing to shed his heart's blood to preserve.

In obtaining an insight into the habits and manners of the women, I possess considerable advantages; first, from my brother's knowledge of the East, and secondly, from my plan of adhering strictly to habits cherished by the people, which system has secured at once their respect, while it has excited their surprise. We have even gone so far as to adopt their manner of eating; and here I must digress to beg you not to say "How very disgusting!" but read *how* we do it, and then you may confess that it is not so unpleasant as you thought. The dishes are prepared in a very delicate manner; for instance, small cucumbers and other vegetables of a similar kind are scooped out and stuffed with minced meat and rice; minced meat is wrapped in vine-leaves, and so dexterously cooked, that each leaf with its contents continues compact, and is easily taken in the fingers. Fried meat in cakes, and the same in form of sausages, are equally convenient; and all I have mentioned, and a hundred others (for there is great variety in their cookery), may be taken almost as delicately as a slice of cake. For soups, rice prepared in the Eastern manner, and stews, we use spoons; and so do the Turks. One difficulty occasionally

presents itself; but not at home. The chief lady of a house, to do her guests honour, presents them with morsels of her own selection, with her own fingers; and in some cases repeats this compliment frequently. It would be a positive affront to refuse these; and I am quite sure that no Englishwoman can so far strain her politeness as to eat as much as her hostess, in her excessive hospitality, desires; though the latter sets her a wonderful example. I have really seen the ladies of this country eat as much as should suffice for three or four moderate meals at one sitting. But to return to my difficulty. I always found it to be the best plan to receive readily, for a time, the morsels which were offered; and when satisfied, to accept perhaps another, and sometimes two or three; at the same time assuring my entertainer, that they were redundant, but that her viands were so extremely well chosen, that I must, after the repast, inquire who has superintended the *cuisine*, and derive from her some information. Thus I removed the impression which was immediately formed, that the dinner was not dressed agreeably with my taste: and induced only the remark, that "the English eat so much less than the Easterns;" accompanied by regret that so little satisfied me, but followed by an expression of pleasure that the dinner was so agreeable to me.

I have not found the system of Eastern etiquette

difficult of adoption ; and from the honourable manner in which I have been received, and treated, and always pressed to repeat my visit, I may draw the conclusion fairly, that I have understood how to please the people. It has been a favourite opinion of mine, and one in which I have been educated, that a little quiet observation of the manners and habits of others will always prevent those differences about trifles which so often disturb society, and sometimes separate even friends. Here I have indeed found the advantage of exercising this observation, and it has proved the means of securing to me invariably polite attention and respect.

I think you would be amused could you see our dinner-arrangements at home. First, a small carpet is spread on the mat ; then, a stool cased with mother-of-pearl, &c. is placed upon it, and serves as the support of a round tray of tinned copper, on which is arranged our dinner, with a cake of bread for each person. A maid then brings a copper ewer and basin, and pours water on the hands of each of our party, and we arrange ourselves round the tray, our Eastern table-napkins spread on our knees. These are larger and longer than English hand-towels, that they may cover both knees when sitting in the Turkish manner. During the meal, the maid holds a water-bottle, or defends us from flies with a fly-whisk. Having no change of

plates, knives, or forks, no time is lost at dinner; and it usually occupies twenty minutes. Thus, much valuable time is saved by avoiding works of supererogation. One or two sweet dishes are placed on the tray with those which are savoury; and it is singular to see the women of this country take morsels of sweet and savoury food almost alternately. Immediately after dinner, the ewer and basin are brought round, the stool and carpet are removed with the tray, and the stool is always placed in another room until again required. There is something very sociable in this mode of sitting at table, and it is surprising to see how many persons can sit with comfort round a comparatively small tray. I should advise you and other friends in England to resume the use of small round tables: I have often regretted they are no longer in fashion: for a small family, they are infinitely more comfortable than the large square or oblong tables used in England.

It is true, as you suppose, that I am sometimes amused at my position, and more particularly so, when, on the occasion of any thing heavy being brought into the hareem, one of the men passes through the passage belonging to it. Their approach is always announced by their saying audibly, "O Protector! (Ya Sátir) and "Permission!" (Destoor), several times. Excepting on such occasions, no man approaches the hareem but the

sakka, or water-carrier ; and I often think that any person with a knowledge of Arabic, and none of the habits of the people, would think these sakkas devotees, judging by their constant religious ejaculations. The men are quite as careful in avoiding the hareem, as the ladies are in concealing their faces, and indeed, in many cases, more so. I have been amused particularly by the care of one of our men, who, having lived many years in a Turkish family, is quite a Turkish servant. On one occasion, on returning home from riding with my boys, my donkey fairly threw me off as he entered the court ; and when this man raised me up (for my head was on the ground), I supported myself for a moment with my hands against the wall of the house, while I assured my poor children, who were exceedingly frightened, that I was not hurt, forgetting that I was *showing my hands* not only to our own men, but to the men who attended the donkeys ! I was immediately recalled to a consciousness of where I was, and of the impropriety of such an exposure, by the servant I have mentioned, who most respectfully covered my hands with my habarah, and wrapped it around me so scrupulously that the men had not a second time the advantage of seeing a finger.

No person can imagine the strictness of the hareem without adopting its seclusion, nor can a stranger form a just estimate of the degree of

liberty enjoyed by the women without mixing with Eastern society. One thing is certain, that if a husband be a tyrant, his wife is his slave; but such cases are extremely rare. I do not pretend to defend the system of marrying blindfold, as it were; nor do I look for those happy marriages which are most frequently found in England; but I am pleased to find the Eastern women contented, and, without a single exception among my acquaintances, so cheerful, that I naturally conclude they are treated with consideration. The middle classes are at liberty to pay visits, and to go to the bath, when they please; but their fathers and husbands object to their shopping; therefore female-brokers are in the frequent habit of attending the hareems. The higher orders are more closely guarded, yet as this very circumstance is a mark of distinction, the women congratulate each other on this subject; and it is not uncommon for a husband to give his wife a pet name, expressive of her hidden charms, such as "the concealed jewel."

There lives opposite to us a good old woman, a devotee, who is a sort of Deborah to the quarter, and who passes judgment from her projecting window on all cases which are proposed for her opinion, much to our edification. One occurred a few days since, which will show you that the system I have described is not confined to any particular grade in society. A young man in the neighbourhood had

been betrothed to a very young girl, upon the recommendation of his fellow-servant, without sending any of his own female relations to ascertain if her appearance were agreeable, or the reverse. Becoming anxious on this subject, two days after the betrothal, he sent a female friend, who asserted that his bride had but one eye, that she was pitiable in appearance, and unfit to become his wife. The person who had recommended her was a married man, and the bridegroom accused him of culpable negligence, in not having ascertained whether she had two eyes or not, as he might have sent his wife to pay her a visit ; while, on his own part, he had taken no such precaution, and, being the most interested, was certainly the most to blame. Such was the state of the case when referred to Deborah. After hearing it patiently, she said to the young man, " My son, why did you consent to be betrothed to a girl who was not known to your mother and to the women of your house ? " " They have been, since my betrothal, to see her," he answered, in a very melancholy tone of voice, " but she sat in a dark room, and they could not tell whether she had two eyes or not ; and, in truth, O my mother, I have bought her many articles of dress, and I have paid four hundred piastres as her dowry, the savings of many months." " Has she learnt any trade," asked the old woman, " that so much was required as her dowry ? " " No," re-

plied the bridegroom; "but she is of a higher family than mine, possessing houses, and lands, and property." "Property belongs to God," replied she; and so saying, she retired from the conference. We have since heard that, although the family of the girl is *too respectable* to permit that her betrothed husband should see her face even in her mother's presence, he has put the houses, and lands, and property in the scale, and found her defect too light to be worthy of consideration.

LETTER XVIII.

April, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

IT is indeed, true, that slavery cannot be presented to the mind but with a revolting aspect ; yet I do assure you that slavery in the East is not what you imagine it to be. Here, perhaps, the slave is more in the power of the master than in the West, and there are some monsters, at whose names humanity shudders, who dreadfully abuse the power they legally claim ; but, generally speaking, an Eastern slave is exceedingly indulged, and many who have been cruelly torn from their parents at an early age, find and acknowledge fathers and mothers in those to whom they are sold. They are generally extremely well dressed, well fed, and allowed to indulge in a degree of familiarity which would astonish you. If they conduct themselves well, they are frequently married by their masters to persons of respectability, and the ceremony of the marriage of a slave in the high hareems is conducted with extreme magnificence. It is not unusual for a grandee to give away in marriage several female slaves, and sometime concubines, on

the same day, to husbands of his own selection. In some instances, the slaves are distressed at being thus disposed of, and would rather remain in their old home, but generally a marriage of this kind is a subject for extraordinary rejoicing ; and accustomed as the women are to submit to the will of others in the affair of matrimony, from the highest to the lowest in the East, the fact of their superiors choosing for them their husbands rather recommends itself to their approval, and excites their gratitude. On the day of their marriage they are dressed in the most costly manner ; while in the hareems to which they belong, Cashmere shawls, sometimes cloth of gold, are laid that they may walk over them. Singing and dancing women are engaged for the occasion, and several girls bearing censers, and others sprinkling perfumes, attend each bride. You have heard and read of the Arab dancing, which is far from delicate, but the dancing in the Turkish hareems is not in any respect objectionable. The girls throw themselves about extravagantly, but frequently gracefully ; and turn heels over head with amusing dexterity. It is not a pleasing exhibition, but not a disgusting one.

I cannot admire the singing, the women choose generally such exceedingly high keys that it resembles screaming rather than singing. I sometimes *think that with the support of a tolerable accom-*

paniment the songs might be agreeable, but the instruments of the country are anything but musical, and interfere considerably with the purposes of harmony. The voices of the singers are remarkably fine, and would be perfection under European culture ; and the performers are usually enthusiastic in their love for their art, but still more so are their hearers. The vocalists are for the most part respectable.

When the slave of a grandee is given away in marriage, the man chosen as her husband is almost always somewhat of a dependant ; and the lady generally treats him as if he were somewhat of a dependant with respect to herself.

I have been exceedingly amused lately, by reading in the "Sketches of Persia," the account which is given by some natives of that country (including persons occupying high offices under government, therefore the noble of the land), of the liberty and power of their women ; and I am disposed to think with them, that women, in many respects, have the ascendancy among the higher orders throughout the East. We imagine in England that the husband in these regions is really lord and master, and he is in some cases ; but you will scarcely believe that the master of a house may be excluded for many days from his own hareem, by his wife's or wives' causing a pair of slippers to be placed outside the door, which sig-

nifies that there are visitors within. It is true that the husband sometimes becomes tired of frequent exclusion, and forbids, as indeed he has a right to do, the constant admission of visitors; but in so doing, he draws down on his head much discomfort. He has his remedy, certainly; but how sad is the system of divorce! Who can defend it? Where a wife has become a mother, the husband is seldom willing to divorce her; but where this is not the case, the affair is far too easily managed.

Among the lower orders, some of the husbands are sad tyrants. The fact is, that the men foolishly marry such little young creatures, they are more like their children than their wives, and their inexperience unjustly provokes their husbands. While on this subject, it occurs to me to tell you that Deborah has a most refractory grand-daughter, who is certainly the plague of her life. This child is in the habit of reviling the neighbours' servants; and a few days since she used abusive language to a man who was sitting in his master's doorway. The doorkeeper was exceedingly provoked, and at once retorted, "When I have a little more money, I will marry you, and punish you every day." This manner of revenge is something really new to us Europeans.

Last week, a little bride was paraded through the streets in our neighbourhood, whose age could scarcely have exceeded ten years. Thinking the



Lady embroidering.

procession, and the whole affair, an exceedingly good joke, she was impatient of control ; and instead of walking under the canopy, and submitting to march between two of her female friends, preceded by a woman fanning her, she insisted upon walking backwards before the former, and fanning them herself. This will give you some idea of the mere children who are married here.

The employments of the hareem chiefly consist in embroidery, on an oblong frame, supported by four legs ; but they extend to superintending the kitchen, and indeed the female slaves and servants generally ; and often ladies of the highest distinction cook those dishes which are particularly preferred. The sherbets are generally made by the ladies ; and this is the case in one hareem I visit, where the ladies, in point of rank, are the highest of Eastern *haut ton*. The violet sherbet is prepared by them in the following manner :—The flowers are brought to them on large silver trays, and slaves commence by picking off the outer leaves ; the ladies then put the centres of the violets into small mortars, and pound them until they have thoroughly expressed the juice, with which, and fine sugar, they form round cakes of conserve, resembling, when hardened, loaf-sugar dyed green. This produces a bright green sherbet, prettier than the blue or pink, and exceedingly delicate. I do not know of what the blue is composed, but am

told that it is a particular preparation of violets, the pink is of roses; the yellow of oranges, apricots, &c. It would be tedious were I to describe the variety of sherbets; but those I have mentioned will give you an idea of these cooling summer drinks. About four table-spoonfuls of syrup in three-quarters or a pint of water form a most agreeable beverage.

You will be surprised to hear that the daughter of the Pasha, in whose presence the ladies who attend her never raise their eyes, superintends the washing and polishing of the marble pavements in her palaces. She stands on such occasions bare-footed on a small square carpet; holding in her hand a silver rod: about twenty slaves surround her; ten throw the water, while others follow them wiping the marble, and lastly polishing it with smooth stones.

It is very grievous that the women in general are merely instructed in handiwork. But I must not speak slightly of their embroidery; for it is extremely beautiful—as superior as it is unlike to any fancy-work practised in England. Taste of a very remarkable kind is displayed in its execution; and similar, in many respects, to that exhibited in the most elaborate decorations of Arabian architecture; but its singular beauty is in some measure produced, where colours are employed, by the plan of often taking the colours at random.

Lady writing.



MARSHALL

The embroidery which is done in the hareems is very superior to any other, and frequently interspersed with precious stones, generally diamonds, pearls, emeralds, and rubies. The rich large brocade trowsers often are richly ornamented with jewels, and are stiff with decorations ; but the Saltah (a small jacket) for chasteness and elegance is that which I most admire of all the embroidered articles of dress. For winter wear, it is of velvet, or fine cloth, lined with silk. Saltahs of rich silk are worn during the autumn and spring ; and, during the summer, dresses of European muslin are almost universally adopted, and are the only kind of apparel suited to the intense heat of an Egyptian summer.

Few of the ladies can read and write even their own language. I know, however, some exceptions. In one family, the daughters have been extremely well instructed by their brother, whose education was completed in Europe. In their library are to be found the works of the first Italian poets and the best literature of Turkey ; and these they not only read, but understood.

LETTER XIX.

Cairo, June, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

THERE has been an alarm of plague in Cairo, and several of the great hareems have been in quarantine. The apprehension has been induced by the fearful murrain which has raged during nine months, as a similar misfortune has proved in former years the forerunner of a severe pestilence.

I mentioned to you some time since that such a calamity was dreaded; and it has in some measure arrived. At El-Mansoorah, the cases of plague have not been few; and while on this subject I must tell you an extraordinary fact, which will show you that it is even possible to extract sweet from one of the bitterest of human draughts. Some Russians have been at El-Mansoorah for the purpose of studying the disease. As a means of discovering whether it be contagious or not, they have employed persons to wear the shirts of the dead, and paid them five piastres a day for so doing. This was a considerable salary, being equal to a *shilling per day!* Now when the poor of this

country consider half a piastre per day a sufficient allowance for each person, and maintain themselves well, in their own opinion, on this trifling sum, you can conceive how charmed they might be with the liberal offers of these Russian gentlemen, were it not for the risk they incurred. Risk, however, they did not imagine. The poor flocked to the physicians from all parts of the town, and *entreated* to be permitted to wear the plague-shirts. One old man urged his request, saying, "I am a poor old man, with a family to maintain; do not refuse me; by your life, let me wear a shirt." The women crowded round the house where their imagined benefactors had taken up their quarters, to bless them for having undertaken to support them, their husbands, and their children: and when the chief of these adventurous gentlemen found the dwelling thus surrounded, he walked forth among them, and, taking off his hat, made a courteous low bow to his dark-eyed visitors; whereupon they made the air resound with the shrill zaghareet, or cries of joy.

Not one of the shirt-wearers died, although the physicians after a short time (during which they awaited the result of their experiment) had recourse to heating the shirts to 60° Réaumur. Still the poor peasants lived, and thrrove on their good fare; but one of the physicians died. How he

took the disorder is of course a subject for controversy, but that the shirt-wearers escaped, is a great triumph to the non-contagionists of Cairo ; and from all we can learn, the best informed are of this party.

In the house of a merchant in Cairo, a slave has lately died of plague, and, according to custom, a soldier was placed at the door to enforce strict quarantine. The merchant did not relish this restraint, and desired the comfort of going in and out at pleasure. Accordingly, he attacked the cupidity of his temporary gaoler, and coaxingly addressed him, saying, "Thou knowest, O my brother, that I am a merchant, and therefore have much business to transact in the markets, where my presence is necessary. Let me go, I beseech thee, and I will hire another to take my place. Consider my case in thy generosity," he added, putting into his hand a piece of nine piastres ; and the soldier found his pity so sensibly touched, that further remonstrance was unnecessary : the merchant passed, and the substitute was accepted—a new way of keeping quarantine !

Long since I told you that I feared the plague might induce us, this year, to go to Upper Egypt ; but the accounts have never been such as to show us the necessity ; indeed, on the contrary, though constantly making the most anxious inquiries, we

did not hear that there had been many cases of plague in the city, until the time of danger had passed.

It is a singular and sad fact, that during our few months' sojourn here this country has been visited by three of its peculiar plagues—murrain, boils and blains (or common pestilence), and locusts. The first has destroyed cattle to an almost incredible amount of value; the second has not been so severe as it usually is; but the locusts are still fearfully eating the fruits of the ground. In the gardens of Ibraheem Pasha and others, the peasants are employed to drive them away by throwing stones, screaming, beating drums, &c.

My assertion with regard to the small daily pay that contents these poor people will show you how much it is in the power of a person of moderate income to dispense comfort to a considerable number of poor grateful fellow-creatures; and could you but see the blind, lame, old people who solicit alms in the streets of Cairo, you would yearn to supply their simple wants.

Those who are above distress are, with the exception of a very small proportion, such as we should number in England among the poor; but, in many respects, they husband their little property in a very strange manner: though they never waste a morsel of food, they are sometimes *extravagant with trifles*, simply from want of ma-

nagement. A short time since we received from a shop a little parcel about a span long, round which was wound forty-seven feet of string, so that the paper was only here and there visible; and this was not, as you might suppose, on account of the value of its contents, which cost but a few pence.

The climate produces a great degree of lassitude, and the people will often use anything within their reach (if their own property) rather than make the smallest exertion; and yet, as I have remarked to you some time since, no people can work harder or more willingly when called on to do so. I do exceedingly like the Arabs, and quite delight in my rides in remarking the grace and politeness which cast a charm on their manners. It is very interesting to see two peasants meet; there appears so much kindly feeling among them, many good-humoured inquiries ensue, and they part with mutual blessings.

While riding out, a few days since, I was surprised by witnessing the extreme display which is exhibited during the wedding festivities of a mere peasant. When I arrived within a few doors of the house of the bridegroom, I passed under a number of flags of red and green silk, suspended to cords extending across the street; above these were hung seven immense chandeliers, composed of variegated lamps; and awnings of green and white *was* were stretched from roof to roof, and

afforded an agreeable shade. Here the bride was paraded, covered with a red Cashmere shawl, numerously attended, and preceded by her fanner, beneath a rose-coloured canopy.

A stranger might imagine that the feast which concludes this display is the result of extreme hospitality, but this is not the case; I was surprised at hearing of the system on which it is conducted. A peasant, for instance, will often buy two sheep, two hundredweight of flour, and butter in proportion; these things forming always the chief articles of a feast prepared for the lower orders in Egypt. He will then add different kinds of fruit according to the season, and abundance of tobacco and coffee; and for the amusement of his visitors, he engages singers, and sometimes dancing-girls. To effect this, he will borrow money, and his next step will be to invite all his relations, and all his friends and acquaintance. These feel obliged to accept the invitation; and no one joins the party without a present in his hand: therefore, at the conclusion of the feast, the bridegroom is often rather a gainer by the festivities than otherwise. In every instance his friends enable him to repay those from whom he has borrowed. Real hospitality has no part in the affair whatever. Ostentation alone actuates the bridegroom in making his preparations.

On the morning after his marriage he is gene-

rally accompanied by his friends into the country, or to a garden, where they feast together, and are usually entertained by dancing and songs. The expense of this *fête champêtre*, in like manner, seldom falls heavily upon the bridegroom.

The Egyptians have an especial passion for gardens and water. Even stagnant water, if sweet, they consider a luxury: running water, however dirty, they hold to be extremely luxurious; and when, during the inundation, the canal of Cairo is full, all the houses on its banks are occupied by persons who sit in their leisure hours smoking by its muddy waters: but the height of their enjoyment consists in sitting by a fountain—this they esteem Paradise.

How much I wish we had the comfort of occasional showers in Egypt: however, one of my boys amuses me often by supplying this desideratum by watering their garden from an upper projecting window; employing for this purpose a large watering-pot with an ample rose, whence many a refreshing shower falls before the lower windows, washing the thick dust from a mulberry-tree, and really giving an agreeable idea of coolness.

This same mulberry-tree was an object of great admiration to a man who described our present house to us before we saw it: he said, after stating the accommodation which the house afforded, “And there is a *tree* in the court!” Having forgotten

what sort of tree it was, he blessed the Prophet (as these people do when they want to brush up their memory), and then said, "It is a vine."

This sultry day I can write no more ; and if able to forget the heat, the poor little sparrows would remind me that it is indeed oppressive, for they are flying in and out of our windows with their beaks wide open. They do not seem calculated to bear this intense heat ; and they congregate round their food and water on the terrace, looking so pitiable during a hot wind, that we should like to transport them to England. There, however, I am afraid they would not tenant the houses so fearlessly of harm as they do in Egypt. Here is no wanton cruelty : a great deal of apathy with regard to suffering is apparent in the character of the people ; but I do not think the Arabs, in general, ever inflict an intentional injury.

LETTER XX.

July, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE I remarked to you the general cheerfulness which reigns in the hareems I had then seen, I have visited one belonging to a Turkish grandee, which offers a sad exception, and touchingly exhibits a picture of family love and blighted happiness. The old and beloved master of this hareem is under a cloud ; he is suffering the displeasure of the Pasha, and is confined in the state prison. I received a most kind welcome from the ladies of his family. I remarked with regret the depression which weighed down the spirits of all who composed it, and I was shocked to hear from the chief lady that she also was a prisoner, having orders not to quit her house.

She was attired in a kind of morning-dress, of white, embroidered with black ; but wore a splendid kind of crown.* This was composed of diamonds, set in gold, forming flowers, &c.,—the whole being of a convex shape, circular, and about six inches in diameter. It was worn upon the crown

* In Arabic a "Kurs."

of the head, attached to the cap round which the head-kerchief was wound, and had a very rich appearance, the diamonds being so near together, that the interstices only served, like the red gold in which the stones were set, to heighten their brilliancy. At a little distance, the crown seemed like one heap of diamonds.

When this lady referred to her heart's trouble, tears rolled down her cheeks ; and I do not think there was one lady or slave present whose eyes were not suffused with tears ; one especially interested me, for she was quite unlike any Eastern I have seen, having the complexion and the auburn hair and eyes of the pretty Irish. She manifested by the expression of her countenance more distress than her companions. I imagined she was one of her master's wives ; for she was attended by her nurse carrying her child (an exquisite little cherub) and several slaves. She did not, however, sit on the divan by "Hánum," or the chief lady.

The mothers here exceedingly fear the evil or envious eye ; and it is quite necessary, when an infant or young child appears, to exclaim, "Má-shálláh," and to refrain from remarking its appearance ; it is also important to invoke for it the protection and blessing of God ; and having done so by repeating the expressive phrases used on such occasions in Eastern countries by Christians as well as Muslims, the parents are happy that their chil-

dren have been introduced to the notice of those who put their trust in God.

The apartments of this hareem are situated in a large garden ; and the interior decorations are like those of most Turkish palaces in this country. The walls are painted in compartments, and adorned with ill-executed landscapes, representing villas and pleasure-grounds.

I once told you that in all the hareems I had seen, the chief lady was the only wife : I can no longer make such a boast ; but look and wonder, as an Englishwoman, how harmony can exist where the affection of the husband is shared by —— I do not like to say how many wives.

Hareem-gardens are never agreeable places of resort in or near a town ; for the walls are so high that there is no free circulation of air, and the trellises for the support of vines over the walks are really roofs, necessary certainly at noon-day under a nearly vertical sun, but excluding the only refreshing morning and evening air.

I was surprised, during my second visit to the hareem of Habeeb Effendi, to find the ladies (whom I had not seen for a long time on account of the late plague) immersed in politics, and painfully anxious on account of the difference of opinion which has arisen between the Emperor of Russia and their cousin the Sultán. They earnestly inquired whether England would espouse the cause

of Turkey, and were in some measure comforted by a reference to the friendship which England had so warmly manifested for the young Sultán, and the active measures which our government had adopted for the re-establishment of his rule in Syria. I find the feeling very strong in favour of England in the hareems ; and I conclude that I hear general opinions echoed there. I judge not only from the remarks I hear, but from the honourable manner in which I am treated ; and the reception, entertainment, and farewell I experience are in every respect highly flattering.

I told you of the great politeness that was shown me on the occasion of my first visit to the royal ladies I have just mentioned. On my second visit to them I was almost perplexed by the honour with which they distinguished me ; for the chief lady resigned her own place, and seated herself below me. I was obliged to comply with her desire ; but did so with much reluctance.

I saw nothing that I need describe, in the way of dress or ornament, on this occasion, excepting the girdle of the elder daughter. This was a broad band, of some dull material of a pale grey colour, embroidered with small white beads, which composed an Arabic sentence, and having a most splendid diamond clasp, in the form of two shells, somewhat wider than the belt. There was another visitor present, who by her title and appearance I

saw to be a lady of very high rank ; and if the Turks, as some people say, admire fat women, she must be considered a prodigious beauty. I have seldom, if ever, seen a larger person.

One of the most beautiful women I have seen in Egypt is the wife of a celebrated poet. I love to look on a pretty face, and hers is especially sweet. Her manners, too, are charming ; her welcome on my introduction was particularly cordial, and her request that I would pay her a long visit was made with evident sincerity of kindness. With the exception of her diamond crown, her dress was simple, and her whole demeanour free from affectation ; I should imagine her character is a source of cheerful contentment to her husband and her children. You will forgive my national pride and prejudice when I say she reminded me of an Englishwoman.

The house of this lady's family is of the old Arab description, and is situated on the margin of a lake in the outskirts of the city, surrounded by excellent and very picturesque houses, having, on the ground-floors, courts roofed with trellises, supported by pillars, and other fanciful wood-work, and covered with jasmines and vines. In these the male inhabitants spend their pastime or idle hours, looking on the water. The upper floors are furnished with meshrebeeyehs (the projecting windows I have described to you) overlooking the lake.

From visits I turn to visitors ; to tell you that



Egyptian House.

a most unwelcome guest made his appearance yesterday. Between the blind and glass of a window in the room where we usually sit, I discovered a large snake, more than a yard and a half long. It was outside the window ; but directly it saw me through the glass, it raised its head, and protruded its black forked tongue. It was of a light brown colour, and down the centre of its back its scales were of a bright yellowish hue. It was in such a situation that it was scarcely possible to catch it, and indeed my brother was the only man in the house who would attempt to do so ; for our servants were so overcome by superstitious dread, that they would not approach the intruder, and one of the men dared not even look at it : we were therefore unwilling he should touch it, and persuaded him to send for a snake-charmer.

There was considerable difficulty in finding, at such a moment, a man of this profession, although Cairo abounds with them. At length a poor old man arrived, who was nearly blind, and mistook a towel (which was pressed between the sashes to prevent the creature entering) for the object of my dread. He addressed it with much courtesy, saying "O Blessed !" several times, which expressed an invitation : to this, however, the snake turned a deaf ear ; and twining itself dexterously through the trellis blind, it curled into a window in the court, and was entirely lost. We certainly would

rather it had been found, although assured it could only be, from our description, a harmless house-snake.

You have doubtless read many accounts of the feats of Eastern snake-charmers, and wondered at their skill. Very lately, a friend of ours witnessed an instance of the fascination, or rather attraction, possessed by one of these people. He was in the house of an acquaintance when the charmer arrived, who, after a little whistling, and other absurd preliminaries, invoked the snake thus : "I conjure thee, by our Lord Suleymán" (that is, Solomon, the son of David), "who ruled over mankind and the Ján" (or Genii); "if thou be obedient, come to me ; and if thou be disobedient, do not hurt me !" After a short pause, a snake descended from a crevice in the wall of the room, and approached the man, who secured it. No other snake appearing, it was decided that the house was cleared, and our friend requested the snake-charmer to accompany him to his own house. He did so, and invoked the snakes in the same words. The invocation was attended by the same result : a snake descended, and in the same manner resigned itself to the serpent-charmer.

With regard to the serpent still in our house, let us say, with the Muslims, we are thankful it is not a scorpion. Their philosophy is a lesson to us.

Several poor neighbours have lately been stung by scorpions: we sent them some carbonate of ammonia to apply to the wounds, and it was the means of producing the happiest results.

Cairo, with its many ruined houses, affords innumerable nests for noxious reptiles; and the progress of its decay has lately been so rapid, that at last a proclamation has been issued by the Pasha for extensive alterations and repairs throughout the city. The houses are to be whitewashed within and without; those who inhabit ruined houses are to repair or sell them; and uninhabited dwellings are to be pulled down for the purpose of forming squares and gardens; meshrebeeyehs are forbidden, and mastabahs are to be removed. Cairo, therefore, will no longer be an Arab city, and will no longer possess those peculiarities which render it so picturesque and attractive. The deep shade in the narrow streets, increased by the projecting windows—the picturesque tradesman, sitting with one friend or more before his shop, enjoying the space afforded by his mastabah—these will be no more; and while I cannot but acknowledge the great necessity for repairing the city, and removing the ruins which threaten the destruction of passengers, I should have liked those features retained which are essentially characteristic—which help, as it were, to group the people, and form such admirable accessories to pictures.

I must add to this letter an account of a shameful and very ridiculous imposition which was practised upon us a fortnight ago. A poor old man who had for some time filled the situation of doorkeeper to our quarter, had long been ill, and had been assisted by several gentlemen in procuring some necessary comforts. One day my brother received a letter from the Sheykh of the quarter, telling him that poor Mohammad the doorkeeper had received mercy at the sixth hour of the preceding night, and expressing a hope that he would give them the price of his shroud. My brother, accordingly, sent one of his servants to the house of Mohammad, where he found his body laid out, a washer of the dead attending, and his wife apparently in great distress on account of her loss. She returned the most grateful acknowledgments for the bounty which was sent to aid in enabling her to bury her poor husband ; and after a while the affair passed from our recollection (we never having seen the poor man), or if remembered, it was only to inquire who would supply his place.

The old woman removed to another house a few days after ; and a maid-servant of ours, on passing by chance her new dwelling, was surprised to the last degree to see the late doorkeeper sitting within its threshold. "What," exclaimed she, "my uncle Mohammad alive, and well!" "Praise be to God," he answered, "I am well, and have lived on the

bounty of your master, the Efendee ; but, by your life, my daughter, do not tell him that I am alive." The old man, I should here tell you, is no relation of the maid's ; this being one of the usual modes of address among the lower orders. The maid promised his existence should continue a secret ; but she found on her return home it was impossible to keep her word, and the quarrel which ensued between her and the servant who conveyed the money for the shroud (both believing their own eyes) was as violent as that between Hároon Er-Rasheed and his wife Zubeydeh, or rather that between their two emissaries, on the subject of Abu-l-Hasan the wag.

LETTER XXI.

September, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In describing to you the honourable reception and elegant entertainment I experienced in the Pasha's hareem, I cannot be too minute.

The chief residence of his ladies is the Kasr ed-Dubárah, a fine house situated on the west of Cairo, on the eastern bank of the Nile, and justly their favourite retreat. After riding through the plantations of Ibraheem Pasha, which almost surround the palace, we arrived at the great gates of the Kasr, through which we entered a long road within the high walls covered with trellis closely interwoven with vines. At the end of this we dismounted, and walked on a beautiful pavement of marble through several paths, until we arrived at the curtain of the hareem. This being raised, we were immediately received by a young wife of Mohammad 'Alee, who addressed my friend Mrs. Sieder in the most affectionate terms, and gave us both a most cordial welcome. In a moment a *crowd* of ladies assembled round us, vying with each other in paying us polite attention; and





A Turkish Lady in the summer dress of white muslin.

having disrobed me, they followed us (the wife of the viceroy with us leading the way) to the grand saloon.

This is a very splendid room, paved with marble, as indeed are all the passages, and, I imagine, all the apartments on the ground-floor ; but as several are entirely covered with matting, I cannot assert this to be the case. The pavement in the saloon is simply white marble, the purest and best laid I have seen in the East. The ceiling (which is divided into four distinct oblong compartments) is painted admirably in stripes of dark and light blue, radiating from gilded centres, from each of which hang splendid chandeliers containing innumerable wax-lights. The corners and cornices are richly decorated. The pavement under the two centre compartments is not matted, but the two ends, to the right and left on entering, are covered with fine matting, and fitted with crimson divans.

The windows are furnished with white muslin curtains edged with coloured fringe, some pink and some blue. All the looking-glasses (of which there are perhaps six in the saloon) are furnished with festoons and curtains of pink and blue gauze. There is one table with a cover of pink crape embroidered in stripes of gold, and having upon it a large glass case of stuffed birds. On either side of the door are fanciful stands for large square glass lanterns, composed of pillars, round which

are twined artificial flowers. The windows are European in form, and the hareem blinds are composed of tasteful iron-work ; I can scarcely say filigree, the pattern is too bold. The entire interior decorations are in light and summer taste, and the saloon charmingly cool.

We crossed to an apartment on the opposite side, where the same lady placed us on the divan and seated herself by our side. This room is entirely covered with matting, and furnished with most luxurious divans, extending round three sides, not raised (as is usual) on a frame about a foot or more in height, but entirely of cotton, forming mattresses two feet in thickness, placed on the ground. These are covered with very gay chintz, as are also the cushions which incline against the walls ; and at the right and left upper corners are distinct square cushions, covered with white muslin embroidered with black braid, and each having back cushions to correspond. Above all these there is a row of small cushions, covered with white muslin and embroidered with black, corresponding in pattern with the corner seats. The curtains resemble those in the saloon.

Here we received coffee, which was handed to us by the chief lady of the household, the treasurer, a particularly lady-like person, to whom it was handed by a lady who bore it on a silver salver, *attended by several others* ; one carrying the little

coffee-pot in a silver vessel, suspended by chains, and also used as a censer, containing burning charcoal. The whole group was most picturesque, and many of the ladies were fair, young, and beautiful.

The lady of the Páshá then proposed our returning to the saloon, that she might conduct us to the widow of Toosoon Páshá, and to the daughter of Mohammad 'Alee Páshá, who were sitting at the upper corner. I found the former lady seated on a cushion on the ground, next to the right-hand corner, and the daughter of the Viceroy took the seat of honour, which was also a cushion placed on the ground. Numerous ladies and slaves were in attendance; all standing in a line before the edge of the mat.

We were soon joined by another wife of the Páshá, the mother of Mohammad 'Alee Bey (a boy about nine years of age); her designation is "The lady, the mother of Mohammad 'Alee Bey."

It would be a breach of etiquette, and contrary to hareem laws, were I to describe *particularly* the persons of the wives of the Páshá, or any lady after distinguishing her by her name or her situation in a family; but I may in *general* terms express my admiration of the two ladies I have seen, and I think they are the *only* wives of the viceroy. Both are young—the one is a dignified

and handsome person, and the other especially gentle and very lovely.

Soon after noon, dinner was announced ; and the widow of Toosoon Páshá led the way to a room adjoining the saloon, where a most elegant dinner was arranged, on a very large round silver tray, placed on a stool, and surrounded by cushions. The passages we passed were occupied by innumerable black female slaves, and some eunuchs, dressed in all the variety of gay Eastern costume, and forming a curious contrast and a most picturesque back-ground to the ladies and white slaves who surrounded and accompanied us. On either side of the door several ladies, each with an embroidered napkin hung on her right arm, held silver ewers and basins that we might wash our hands before advancing to the table.

No one was admitted to the table but the widow of Toosoon Páshá, the daughter of Mohammad 'Alee Páshá, the mother of Mohammad 'Alee Bey, with ourselves, and a lady of great importance in the East, the foster-mother of 'Abbás Páshá.* The place of the younger wife was vacant.

The tray was covered with small silver dishes filled with various creams, jellies, &c., and most tastefully garnished with exquisite flowers. In the centre was a fore-quarter of lamb, on piláv. I

* 'Abbás Páshá is the reputed successor to the Páshálik.

was truly glad, on this occasion especially, that my home-habits had been Eastern ; had the case been otherwise, a joint of meat to be eaten without knife or fork would have been a formidable object ; for, under any circumstances, I should not have anticipated that the widow of Toosoon Páshá, who is also the mother of Abbás Páshá, and who, being the eldest, was the most honoured at table, would have distinguished me as she did, by passing to me, with her own fingers, almost every morsel that I ate during dinner. The mother of Moham-mad 'Alee Bey in the same manner distinguished Mrs. Sieder.

The lamb was succeeded by stew ; the stew by vegetables ; the vegetables by savoury cream, &c., composing an innumerable variety ; and each was removed, and its place filled, when perhaps only tasted. Sweet dishes, most delicately prepared, succeeded these in rapid succession ; and, with one exception, all were in silver dishes. Ladies attended close to our divan with fly-whisks ; behind them about thirty formed a semicircle of gaily-dressed, and, in many cases, beautiful women and girls ; and those near the door held large silver trays, on which the black slaves who stood without placed the dishes, that the table might be constantly replenished.

Black female slaves in the houses of the great are not permitted to enter an apartment where are

visitors ; but black eunuchs, when favourites with their masters, are constantly to be found in the very centre of a high hareem.

In presenting the morsels to me, the widow of Toosoon Páshá constantly said, "In the name of God ;" and these words are always said by the Muslims before eating or drinking. "Praise be to God" is the grace after either.

There is one particularly agreeable custom observed after dinner in the East ; each person is at liberty to leave the table when satisfied. To a European it is really a relief to do so, the dishes are so numerous, varied, and rich.

There is much grace in the manners of the ladies of the East even in the most trifling actions : it was pretty to observe the elegance with which the silver ewers and basins were held for us when we left the tray. We were succeeded at the table by the highest ladies of the household ; and I imagine others, according to their rank, dined after these, until all had taken their meal.

We returned to the saloon, where we were met by the younger wife of the Páshá, who had been prevented joining us at table by indisposition. She gave me a most kind general invitation to the Kasr ed-Dubárah, and a particular one to a festival which is to take place on the occasion of a grand marriage some time before I quit this country. *The fantasia*, she assured me, is to be the most

splendid that can be prepared or arranged ; and I shall soon be permitted to tell you the name of the bride. This she told me ; but I must not mention it until the day is fixed for the marriage. It is an Egyptian state-secret !

There are many extremely beautiful women in the hareem of the Páshá, and many handsome young girls ; some not more than ten years of age. The Turkish ladies, and the Circassians, and Georgians, are generally extremely fair ; and I must particularly mention one who was remarkably beautiful, and more splendidly dressed than any of her companions. She did not enter the saloon until we heard dinner announced ; and her appearance was something very attractive. Her yelek and shin-tiyan (or long vest and trousers) were of rich plum-coloured silk, and the quiet colour of her dress exhibited with brilliant effect a profusion of costly diamond ornaments. Her head-dress was tastefully arranged, and the richer sprays of diamonds were lavishly interspersed in a dark crape headkerchief.

I cannot take a better opportunity of describing the Eastern dress, as worn by the Turkish ladies, than while the hareem of the Páshá is fresh in my recollection. The tarboosh (or red cap) is trimmed with a very large and full tassel of dark blue silk, which is separated and spread over the crown, and those ladies who wear rich ornaments almost always display their most costly jewels on the back of the

head, either in the form of a *kurs*, which I have described to you, or a spray, very much resembling in form a *fleur de lis*, but broader and shorter ; this is placed at the division of the tassel, which latter is often so broad when spread, as to extend an inch beyond the head on either side in a front view. The headkerchief is wound round the head, partly over the forehead, and the fringed ends are arranged on one side ; the front hair is cut short, and combed towards the eyebrows, and this is extremely unbecoming, disfiguring even a beautiful face, excepting in cases where the hair curls naturally, and parts on the forehead. The long hair is disposed in numerous small plaits, and looped up on either side over the headkerchief. In many cases, the hair of the younger ladies, and white slaves, is dishevelled, and hanging loosely on the shoulders ; but this I have only observed in the Turkish hareems : many in the Kasr ed-Dubárah wear their long hair flowing on their shoulders, and, in some instances, their attractions are considerably heightened by this simplicity ; but no *coiffure*, however studied, or simple, is so pretty as that worn by the Arab ladies, whose long hair hanging down the back is arranged in many small plaits often lengthened by silk braid, and generally adorned with hundreds of small gold ornaments, resembling oval spangles, which harmonize better with the *Eastern costume* than any other fashion.

To return to the Turkish ladies : they wear the yelek considerably longer than their height ; the back part resting on the ground, and forming a graceful train ; and in walking over a mat or carpet, they hold the skirts in front over the arm. The shirt is of silk gauze, fine muslin, or a very beautiful thin crape, with glossy stripes, which is made of raw silk in the hareems, and is cream colour : the sleeves of this are not confined at the wrist. The shintiyán are extremely full, and generally of a different material from the yelek : the former being of rich brocade, large patterned muslin, or chintz, or sometimes of plain satin, or gros de Naples. The yelek, on the contrary, is made of a material with a delicate pattern, generally a small stripe, whether of satin, Indian silk, or muslin.

Those ladies who are not perfectly idle, and who have not slaves as train-bearers, tuck their skirts through their girdles ; and thus, I think, the dress is very gracefully worn. Ladies of distinction always wear Cashmere shawls round the waist, generally red ; and those in Kasr ed-Dubárah had a narrow edge of gold, with gold cords and tassels at the corners. There, the nurz were different from any I had before seen ; being of embroidered cloth, of various colours ; and the daughter of the Páshá, and others, had their long sleeves buttoned at the wrist. 'The sleeves are

always so made that they can be buttoned if their length prove inconvenient ; but as the great ladies of the land do not occupy themselves in any way, but spend their time on their divans, they can scarcely find these hanging draperies incommodious.

This description of dress leads me back to the lady whose appearance so especially attracted my admiration. After I requested that my riding-dress might be brought, I observed several ladies crossing the saloon, among whom she walked, bearing it towards me, and looking like a queen in person and in dress. She dressed me with much grace, and then with her companions stepped back into the doorway to receive and give the parting salutation. One circumstance I have omitted, namely, the crimson embroidered curtains, which hang before all the doorways in the palace ; for the doors stand open, a closed door being never permitted in the hareems. Much taste is displayed in the embroidery of these curtains ; indeed, the perfection of taste is to be found in the decorations of the Kasr ed-Dubárah.



The Door-curtains.

LETTER XXII.

December, 1843.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I CANNOT better give you an idea of the order and discipline observed in the hareems of the great and wealthy than by comparing each to a petty state, with its rulers and its officers. The person occupying the place of highest rank, next to the master, is the chief lady, who is often called, properly or improperly, Hánúm, or, correctly, Khánum. This title, which literally signifies 'My Lord,' (for Turkish ladies, whom we in England generally look upon as persons treated with little respect, are honoured with male titles) by right belongs first only to those ladies of the Sultán whom we call sultanas; that is, to any of the near female relations of the sovereign, and to any of his ladies who has borne a prince or princess; secondly, to the wives of the grand vezeer; but it is sometimes given by courtesy to the wives of grandees in general, and sometimes to ladies of inferior grades. The male title Efendim (literally 'My Master') is also given to the same ladies.

The chief lady of the hareem is the mother of

the master; or, if his mother be not living, his sister, or sisters, take precedence; and next to them ranks his favourite wife. The question of priority among the wives of one man is more easily arranged than you, with European notions respecting the rights of women, could imagine possible. It is generally settled thus: the first wife, if she become a mother, retains her rank above any wife subsequently taken; but if not, she yields to another more fortunate, and consequently, more beloved and honoured. The other wives take their stations according to the preference of their husbands.

Each wife, among the higher classes, has her separate apartments, and distinct attendants; for even *Eastern* wives might manifest jealousy under circumstances of constant intercourse with each other. In the cases of the great, it is not unusual for each wife to occupy a separate mansion; but whether in one large house, or several smaller ones, the hareem of the grandee occupies the whole, or nearly the whole, of the abode, which is generally enclosed by garden walls as lofty as the houses in the immediate neighbourhood. Without the aid of scaling ladders, or the more effectual mean of admission —intrigue, the hareem of the Turkish grandee is well secured from illicit visitors. At the outer door is stationed a bowáb, or door-keeper, and the second is guarded by eunuchs. Beyond the second *is suspended* the hareem curtain which I have be-

fore described; and in the first of the inner apartments are the black female slaves who undertake the menial offices of the hareem. After passing the outer apartments white slaves are found carrying silver sprinkling bottles of scented water, small silver censers suspended by chains, coffee, pipes, sherbet, and sweetmeats; each set of coffee-cups or sherbet-cups being placed on a small tray,



Coffee Service.

and often concealed beneath a round splendidly embroidered cover, bordered with deep and heavy gold fringe. Among the white slaves may be observed several who are considered superior to their companions, walking about as though superintending their arrangements; and among the former, especially, I have found the most lovely girls in the hareems, many of them fully justifying my pre-

conceived ideas of the celebrated Georgian and Circassian women. Excepting in two cases, cheerfulness has appeared to me to reign among these fair prisoners ; entirely excluded as they are from intercourse with any persons of the other sex, except their master and his very near relations. If any other man attempted to pass beyond the first entrance, his temerity would in all probability be punished with death the moment his purpose should be discovered.

The houses of the grandees, separate from their hareems, are generally accessible ; and the liberty of ingress is sometimes not a little abused. Last month Mohammad 'Alee was residing in his palace at Shubra, and two Europeans resorted thither for the purpose of seeing the gardens. They wore the Frank dress, with the exception of their having adopted the tarboosh, a shawl round the waist, and red shoes. After perambulating the gardens, they entered the palace, and meeting with no opposition, they examined one apartment after another, and at length entered the bedroom of the Páshá, where sat his highness, nearly undressed ! Although taken by surprise, his Turkish coolness did not forsake him : calling for his dragoman, he said, " Enquire of those gentlemen where they bought their tarbooshes." The Europeans replied, " They were purchased in Constantinople ;" " and *there*," rejoined the Páshá, " I suppose they learned their



manners. Tell them so." Judging from this retort that their presence was not agreeable, the Franks saluted the viceroy, and withdrew.

This reminds me of another late occurrence, in which, however, was exhibited only a want of knowledge of Turkish etiquette; no absence of gentlemanly mind. An European gentleman who lately visited Egypt was introduced, among others in this city, to a grandee, and was accompanied to his residence by a friend of my brother, and Mons. L—, both of whom, during many years, have resided in this country, and visited in the best Eastern society. After they had partaken of the usual refreshment of pipes and coffee, sherbet was brought, and handed first to the stranger. He looked at it for a moment, and then at the gaily embroidered napkin hung over the arm of the slave who presented it; and following the impulse given, I conclude by his preconceptions of Eastern habits of cleanliness, dipped his fingers in the sweet beverage, and wiped them on the napkin. Mons. L—, with the perfect delicacy which characterises French politeness, followed his example, dipped his fingers in the sherbet, and wiped them on the napkin. I wonder whether their host understood his motive for such strange doings. My brother's friend sat at a little distance from his companions, and confessed that he drank his sherbet.

To return to the organization of the great ha-

reems : the Hânum generally has four principal attendants, two of whom are elderly, and act simply as companions : the third is the treasurer, and the fourth, the sub-treasurer. The next in rank are those who hand pipes and coffee, sherbet and sweet-meats ; and each of these has her own set of subordinates. Lastly rank the cooks and house-slaves, who are mostly negresses. The hareem is a little world of women, in which many have passed their infancy and their childhood ; the scene of their joys and sorrows, their pleasures and their cares ; beyond which, they have no idea of a wider theatre of action ; and from which they anticipate no change but to the hareem of their husbands.

The ideas entertained by many in Europe of the immorality of the hareem are, I believe, erroneous. True it is, that the chief ladies have much power which they might abuse ; but the slaves of these ladies are subject to the strictest surveillance ; and the discipline which is exercised over the younger women in the Eastern hareem can only be compared to that which is established in the convent. A deviation from the strictest rules of modesty is followed by severe punishment, and often by the death of the delinquent. The very framework of Eastern society is so opposed to the opinions of Europeans, that I will venture to prophecy it must be the work of several generations to root up prejudice before the mind of the Eastern can be pre-

pared for the reception of our ideas of civilization, That Christianity is the only medium through which happiness may be attained by any people is most certain ; therefore as the Easterns are very far from being Christians, except in the mere dogmas of their faith (inasmuch as they acknowledge the Messiah, though denying his divine nature, and his atonement for sin), so they are very far from being really happy.

The prejudice existing among the Turkish women against the pure doctrines of Christianity is evident from occasional, or rather, I should say, from frequent remarks made in my presence, and to my friends. One lady, who gave me a general and warm invitation to her hareem, and treated me really affectionately, so far betrayed her opinions, that she exclaimed to me, and to my friend, " What a pity that you are Christians !" Alas ! such feelings are too general for our minds to be blinded to the fact of their existence ; and so long as martyrdom awaits the convert to our blessed faith, little or no progress will be made by those benevolent men, whose devotion of happiness and of life to our Saviour's cause will secure for them the favour of their God, however unsatisfactory may be the results of their labours.

Of those female slaves who, after the age of childhood, have been brought from countries where they have enjoyed almost unbounded liberty, few,

perhaps, become reconciled to confinement within the narrow and limited precincts of the hareem. Some, by their personal charms rendered favourites of the master, doubtless delight in the luxurious prison. Others, who have, in addition to his favour and affection, a stronger tie to their foreign home—that of their having borne him a child, would receive their emancipation, if accompanied by a dismissal and a marriage to some other person, with earnest prayers for the retraction of the intended boon. Brought up, in general, with Muslim feelings, they become the most affectionate of mothers. Their maternal tenderness is often most especially manifested by their dread of the evil eye; a superstition which obliges me, in my intercourse with Muslim mothers, to observe the utmost caution in making any remarks upon children.

In one instance, I was unfortunate, in one respect, in a remark of this kind; but fortunate in another respect, inasmuch as one of my own children was the subject. I occasioned much distress to an Arab lady who was passing the day with me (when, in the course of conversation, the effects of climate on the constitution of the young were discussed) by observing that my eldest boy had not suffered as the rest of our party had done from the heat; adding thankfully, that I considered him strong. In an instant she vociferated, "Bless the

Prophet! bless the Prophet!" and repeated this for some time, while she coloured deeply, and exhibited the most extraordinary agitation. I confess I was at first confounded; for although I perceived that in her enthusiasm she feared that I had endangered my dear boy's welfare by expressing my opinion of his health, and that she earnestly desired I should avert any calamity by doing as she directed at the moment, I was not at all disposed to *bless the Prophet*; but I endeavoured to quiet her apprehensions by repeating in Eastern phraseology "Praise be to God for the health of my family," and "If it please God may it continue." Finding me calmly and gravely endeavouring to convince her that the English do not fear expressing their satisfaction in the welfare of those they love, she became more tranquil, but I do not think she felt reassured. By saying "O God, bless our Lord Mohammad!" the effect of the evil eye is believed to be prevented; and it is not a little singular, that my friend feared the effect of my own admiring eye, upon my own child.

It is very difficult for a stranger, like myself, to avoid making mistakes in various other ways. For example, I heard footsteps on the stairs leading to our terrace a few days since, and beckoned a maid, who was passing, that she might inquire for me who was gone up stairs, when, to my astonishment, she ran from me immediately; and though I called

her by name, and induced her to look round, she saw me again beckoning with my hand, and continued her flight. Annoyed at what appeared to be perverseness, I clapped my hands, and she at once returned. "Why did you run away when I beckoned you?" said I. "Because," replied she, "you made a signal to me to go away." That is, I turned towards her the back of my hand. Had I reversed the position, or beckoned with the palm downwards, she would have understood that I wanted her; as it was, she supposed that she was to run away as fast as possible.

I do not remember that I mentioned to you the uncouth dresses that are worn here at this season of the year by the ladies of the higher classes. When I pay an unexpected visit to such persons, I generally find most of them in quilted jackets of a description as little becoming as can be imagined, or enveloped in any warm covering that they have at hand. Their rooms are warmed by means of the brazier, which produces a close and suffocating smell, such as I cannot easily endure; and, indeed, I seldom feel much occasion for a fire. The weather is now really delightful; but it has not been so uniformly since the commencement of winter. As in the cases of most travellers, our residence here has been marked by peculiarities. The extraordinary inundation of last year, and the heavy rain of this, are events which have had no pre-

cedents on record during the lives of the present generation. After wishing for occasional showers during eight months in vain, not a drop of rain falling, we had on the thirtieth of October a tremendous storm of rain, attended with thunder and lightning, and one almost continuous peal of thunder lasted two hours, rattling and rolling in a most awful manner, while the rain fell in torrents ; but on the first of last month, the rain was still more copious : it poured through the roofs and ceilings ; and we and our servants during the storm were seeking dry corners in which to deposit cushions, mattresses, and other furniture ; and were running hither and thither to remove them as the water gained upon us. Our house is extremely well-built for Cairo, and yet, in the upper rooms, pretty smart showers fell through the ceilings for some time after the storm abated, and only one room in the house escaped the general flooding. Our poor neighbours suffered severely, and fearful has been the illness which has ensued ; indeed, the inhabitants are still feeling lamentably the effects of that tremendous storm. Many houses have fallen in consequence of it ; and others have been greatly injured. The roofs, in many instances, are seldom plastered with anything better than mud, but simply composed of planks and strong beams, on which coarse matting is laid ; and often over all only rubbish is strewed to preserve the matting

from being blown away: therefore the showers which penetrate these roofs sometimes become showers of mud, to the destruction of furniture. Rain, however, seldom falls in this part excepting in the cooler season, when a few showers occur, and those are generally light.

LETTER XXIII.

January, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAS presented yesterday to Nezleh Hánum, by my friend Mrs. Sieder. My reception was remarkably flattering, and perhaps unusually so, because it took place in her bed-room. I was not aware that she was suffering from severe indisposition when I called at the Kasr ed-Dubárah, and would not have intruded when I was informed that this was the case ; but when she heard that I had arrived, she expressed her desire to see me as soon as her two physicians, then in attendance, should have quitted her chamber. Her highness is the eldest daughter of the Páshá, and therefore holds the highest rank among the ladies of Egypt. I have before said that she is the widow of the Deftardár Mohammad Bey.

While we were sitting in one of the rooms opening into the saloon, the curtain before our door was suddenly closed ; for the physicians were passing. In a few minutes the curtain was withdrawn, and I was conducted to the presence of her highness. She was supported by pillows, and evidently

suffering much from cough, and oppression of the chest. She received me with much affability, and at once requested me to sit by her side on a raised divan, which I imagine is her bed. Low divans surrounded the room, and the pavement was covered with a Turkey carpet. It had in no respect the character of a bed-room, but rather that of a luxuriously furnished Turkish winter sitting-room. It opens into a noble saloon, over that which I formerly described to you. I found the youngest son of the Páshá, Mohammad 'Alee Bey, sitting on a cushion at the feet of his sister, Nezleh Hánúm, and finding me to be unacquainted with Turkish, he politely conversed with me in French. He is nine years of age, and in a few months will be considered beyond the hareem age. His mother, and other ladies, sat on my left hand. Thus I saw, on the one hand, a lady about fifty years of age—the daughter of the Páshá, and on the other, a very lovely young woman, step-mother to her highness, the wife of her father, and the mother of her little brother.

Her highness, in features, and especially in her eyes, bears a strong resemblance to her father, having a countenance full of intelligence, and capable of the most varied expression ; generally quick and searching in glance ; but often beaming upon me with the sweetest smile imaginable. She directed one of the Páshá's favourites, the mother

of two of his children, to wait upon me.* This lady received the coffee from another at the entrance of the chamber, and handed it to me in an exquisite gold *zarf*, richly set with rows of large and small diamonds, arranged spirally, and ornamented between the rows with most delicate enamel. Yesterday was the fourth day of the Great 'Eed, or Great Beirám (the latter of the two principal annual festivals of the Muslims), and a day appropriated to visits of ceremony to her highness by those ladies who have access to her; the three preceding days having been spent by them in visiting the tombs of relations and friends. While I was sitting with her, many ladies came in to pay their respects to her; but in consequence of her illness, they were simply dressed, with the exception of one lady, who was most splendidly attired. She had on the back of her head a profusion of diamonds, and wore a long orange-coloured Cashmere *jubbeh*, richly embroidered, and forming, as she walked, a glittering train of gold. She only kissed the border of her highness's robe, and left the room without speaking; none of her visitors did more than kiss her hand; nor did any one of them speak a single word; neither did Nezleh Hánum take any notice of their salutation, otherwise than by allowing them to take her hand.

* She has lost both her children.

This etiquette, I am informed, is not only observed during her illness, but at all times. The visitors never raised their eyes ; and here I felt peculiarly the advantage of being an Englishwoman, for she kept up with me a lively conversation, and really treated me as an equal. With true Eastern politeness, her highness assured me that our presence made her feel really well ; and begged I would consider her house my own ; using every persuasion to induce us to prolong our visit. Sherbet was handed to us in deep purple cups, exceedingly elegant, and containing a very delicious beverage. I need only say of the sherbet and coffee covers, and the napkins, that they were as splendid as the most exquisite embroidery could render them ; but I must notice her highness's pipes. The mouth-pieces were most tastefully adorned with brilliants, set in rich patterns, and the silk covering of each was elaborately decorated with embroidery. She smoked incessantly ; but was the only lady in the room who did so. By the way, I have become quite reconciled to sitting among those who smoke, for the scent of the tobacco used by the ladies here is extremely mild, and quite unlike what offends my sex so much in England.

Nezleh Hánúm requested me three times to remain when I proposed leaving her, and when at length I urged that I must depart, as it was near sunset, she bade me farewell in the most flattering

terms she could employ. On quitting her chamber, I found the lady next in rank to her who handed me the coffee and sherbet, waiting with another cup of sherbet for me to take *en passant*. I mention this because it is always intended as a distinguishing mark of honour. Several ladies accompanied us to the door, and the treasurer followed me with the present of an embroidered handkerchief from her highness.

Do not think me egotistical, because I describe thus minutely my reception : I consider it important in a description of manners, especially as the receiving and paying visits is the every-day business of an Eastern lady ; and by thus entering into detail, I hope to give an idea of the extreme politeness which characterises those with whom I am acquainted. I may also add, that I think it due to the hareem of the Páshá, and others of distinction, to show the respect they manifest towards the English. Were I a person of rank, there would be nothing remarkable in the honourable attentions I receive ; but as a private lady, I confess they are exceedingly beyond my anticipations. On quitting the Kasr, my attention was attracted by one of the most perfect visions of loveliness I have had the gratification of seeing, in the person of a white slave-girl about seventeen years of age. She stood leaning her head against the doorway, while the line of beauty was described to perfection in the

grace of her attitude : her complexion was delicately fair ; and her hair and eyes were neither of them dark, but of that gentle shade of brown which harmonises so charmingly with a fair complexion. I cannot minutely describe her features ; for there is a perfection of beauty which defies description, and such was her's. There was an expression of melancholy on her sweet countenance, and something so impressive in her appearance, that those who have seen her once cannot forget her.

I fear that I shall not soon receive my summons to the wedding in the Páshá's hareem. There seems to be some cause for delay which I do not know ; and it is a subject respecting which I cannot, consistently with politeness, ask any questions of those who are able to give me the desired information ; but a cousin of the Sultán told me, a few days ago, with the utmost gravity, in allusion to this affair, that there remained *one point* unsettled, namely, *the choice of a bridegroom!* Everything else was arranged. Among the great, in this part of the world, the wishes of a daughter who is to be given away in marriage seem to be very seldom considered. She is nourished and brought up in the expectation of a day when she will be delivered over by her parents to the protection of a husband, a stranger to her both in person and in mind. You may well w-

A Marriage.



such conduct can be tolerated in any land ; and may sigh for those helpless women who are disposed of in this manner ; but the reform of such a practice, under present circumstances, is impossible ; for I am perfectly confirmed in my opinion that the women themselves would shrink with horror at the proposal to make an intended husband personally acquainted with his wife before the marriage.

Marriages among the middle classes in this city are often conducted with much display of a most singular kind. A bridal procession which passed a few days ago through the principal streets in our neighbourhood, was headed by a fool, or buffoon, who, mounted on a horse, and attired in the most grotesque manner, with a high pointed cap, and a long false beard, performed a variety of ridiculous antics. Two men upon camels, each beating a pair of kettle-drums, of enormous but unequal dimensions, attached to the saddles, immediately followed the fool. Then came a man bearing a cresset, formed of a long pole, having at the top several receptacles for flaming wood, which were covered with embroidered handkerchiefs. This cresset, the proper use of which is to serve as a light at night, was thus used merely for display. Next came a man on tall stilts, and two swordsmen gaily attired in cloth of gold, brandishing drawn swords, and occasionally engaging in a mock fight. The swordsmen were succeeded by



Men with Cressets.

two dancing men, and these by vocal and instrumental musicians, singing and playing with the utmost vigour. Then followed five boys, each about five or six years of age, attired in female apparel of the richest description, heavy with gold, and decorated with a profusion of women's ornaments composed of gold and costly jewels, which dazzled the sight. These boys were being paraded *previously* to circumcision; and each of them

partly covered his face with a folded embroidered handkerchief, to guard against the evil eye. They were followed by four women, whose office had been to summon the female friends to the wedding. Each of these, who, like all who followed them, were on foot, had a rich piece of cloth of gold thrown over her left shoulder, with the edges attached together on her right side. The pieces of cloth were presents which they had received. About thirty young girls, all veiled and handsomely dressed, and then about the same number of married ladies (the latter of whom, enveloped in their black silk habarahs, looked, to the eye of a European, as if they were attired rather for a funeral rather than for a wedding) followed next; and then came the bride. She was entirely covered by a rich Cashmere shawl, as usual; but upon that part of it which covered her head-dress and bridal crown were attached such splendid jewelled ornaments as are seldom seen except in the hareems of grandees. Attended by two female relations, one on each side of her, followed by others, and preceded by a woman, who walked backwards, constantly fanning her (notwithstanding the coldness of the weather) with a large fan of black ostrich-feathers, she walked under a canopy of yellow gauze, supported by four poles, at the upper ends of which were attached embroidered handkerchiefs. Behind this walked a band of musicians. The

whole was like one of those scenes described in the Thousand and One Nights ; so gay, so brilliant, and so strikingly Eastern. The procession advanced almost as slowly as a tortoise.

While on the subject of processions and marriage, I may mention a late ridiculous occurrence, arising out of a matrimonial case. Four lawyers of our neighbourhood were last week condemned to hard labour, and paraded through the streets on asses, with their faces towards the tails, for illegal conduct in a suit respecting a refractory wife. In illustration of their offence, I may remind you of a case, which I heard referred for judgment to our neighbour Deborah ; that of a young man who agreed to take as his bride a girl reported to have but one eye, because she was a person of property. He did take her, and expended an extravagant sum upon the wedding festivities ; but the affair did not end as he expected. He found his wife to be about thirteen years of age, a little delicate child ; but possessing some spirit ; for she positively and obstinately refused to acknowledge him as her husband. Having been legally married, he could only divorce her, or cause her to be registered as refractory ; and he adopted the latter course ; in consequence of which he is not obliged to support the girl, her family doing so until she *shall resign* herself to him. Cases of this kind are of frequent occurrence, and though it often hap-

pens that a woman twenty years of age submits without a murmur to be married to a man of threescore, a girl who has not long passed the commencement of her 'teens' very seldom will accept a husband whose chin shows him to be a man.

LETTER XXIV.

February, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

MY brother's account of the hareem, and all that he has written respecting the manners and customs of the women of this country, I have found to be not only minutely accurate, but of the utmost value to me in preparing me for the life which I am now leading. His information, however, on these subjects, being derived only from other men, is, of course, imperfect ; and he has anxiously desired that I should supply its deficiencies, both by my own personal observation, and by learning as much as possible of the state and morals of the women, and of the manner in which they are treated, from their own mouths.

When my experience with respect to the hareem was much shorter as to time, and more limited as to its objects, than it has now been, I was unwilling to express to you an opinion with which I was forcibly impressed within a few months after my arrival in this country ; that a very large proportion of the men, and not a few of the women, are *frequently*, and almost habitually, guilty of the most

abominable acts of cruelty and oppression. Though I have seen much that is amiable in the persons with whom I am acquainted here, the opinion above expressed has been so frequently and strongly confirmed that I cannot withstand the conviction of its being correct.

The wives and female slaves, in the houses of the higher orders, are generally, if I may judge from what I have seen and heard, treated by the husband and master with much kindness ; and the condition of the slaves seems to be, in one respect, preferable to that of the wives ; as the latter are often in constant fear of being divorced ; while the sale of a slave who has been long in a family on account of pecuniary distress, is reckoned disreputable ; and if she have borne a child master, and he acknowledge it to be his sell her is illegal. But among the middle and lower classes, both wives and female slaves are often treated with the utmost brutality : the former are often cruelly beaten ; and the latter, not unfrequently, beaten to death !

A neighbour of ours, a few weeks ago, flogged his wife in a most barbarous manner, and turned her out of doors, because his supper was not ready precisely at the time appointed. Two days after, however, he brought her back. The same man, not long since, beat a female slave so severely, that she lingered in great pain for about a week, and

then died... This man is a Copt, by profession a Christian! Another man beat one of his female slaves until she threw herself from a window, and thus killed herself on the spot. This man also is of the same profession! Much are they mistaken who say, "What need is there of missionaries here to instruct the Copts, who are a Christian people?" One who knows them well assures me that their moral state is far worse than that of the Muslims; that in the *conduct* of the latter there is much more Christianity than is exhibited in that of the former. But the remarks which I am making apply to both the Muslims and the nominal Christians, but to these are more extensively applicable. How sad that the duty of regarding truth should oblige me to make such a distinction! - The English Institution in this city, the chief object of which is to introduce among the Copts that sound knowledge which is the first requisite to improve their religious and moral condition, I look upon as one of the most useful of all the establishments of the Missionary Society. The accounts of it which have appeared in the publications of that Society have scarcely shown its full importance; for this cannot be duly appreciated by any one who does not know by experience the state of the people whom it is designed to benefit, and the admirable judgment and indefatigable and self-denying zeal with which its objects are pursued.

Connected with this Institution is a chapel, sufficiently large and very commodious and comfortable, where I am thankful to have opportunities to join in the service of our Church, and to hear many an excellent sermon. But I must return from this digression, to resume the subject which occasioned it.

Seldom do many days elapse without our hearing the most piteous screams from women and children suffering under the whip or stick; and much trouble do we experience in our endeavours to stop the barbarities practised in our immediate neighbourhood. The answer usually returned to our messages of reproach on these occasions are of the most civil kind, assuring us, with many salutations, that, *for our sakes*, the offender shall be forgiven. I believe that the cruelty which now seems so common may, in some degree, be attributed to the oppression which its exercisers themselves suffer; for every one who has studied the human mind will agree with me, that, with few exceptions, the oppressed become the hardest of oppressors.

The women generally seem full of kind and tender feeling, although (as I have remarked) there are not a few instances of the reverse, and lately we have been distressed by the conduct of two women, our near neighbours. The one, old Deborah, whom I mentioned to you in a former letter, has so cruelly beaten a little girl who liv-

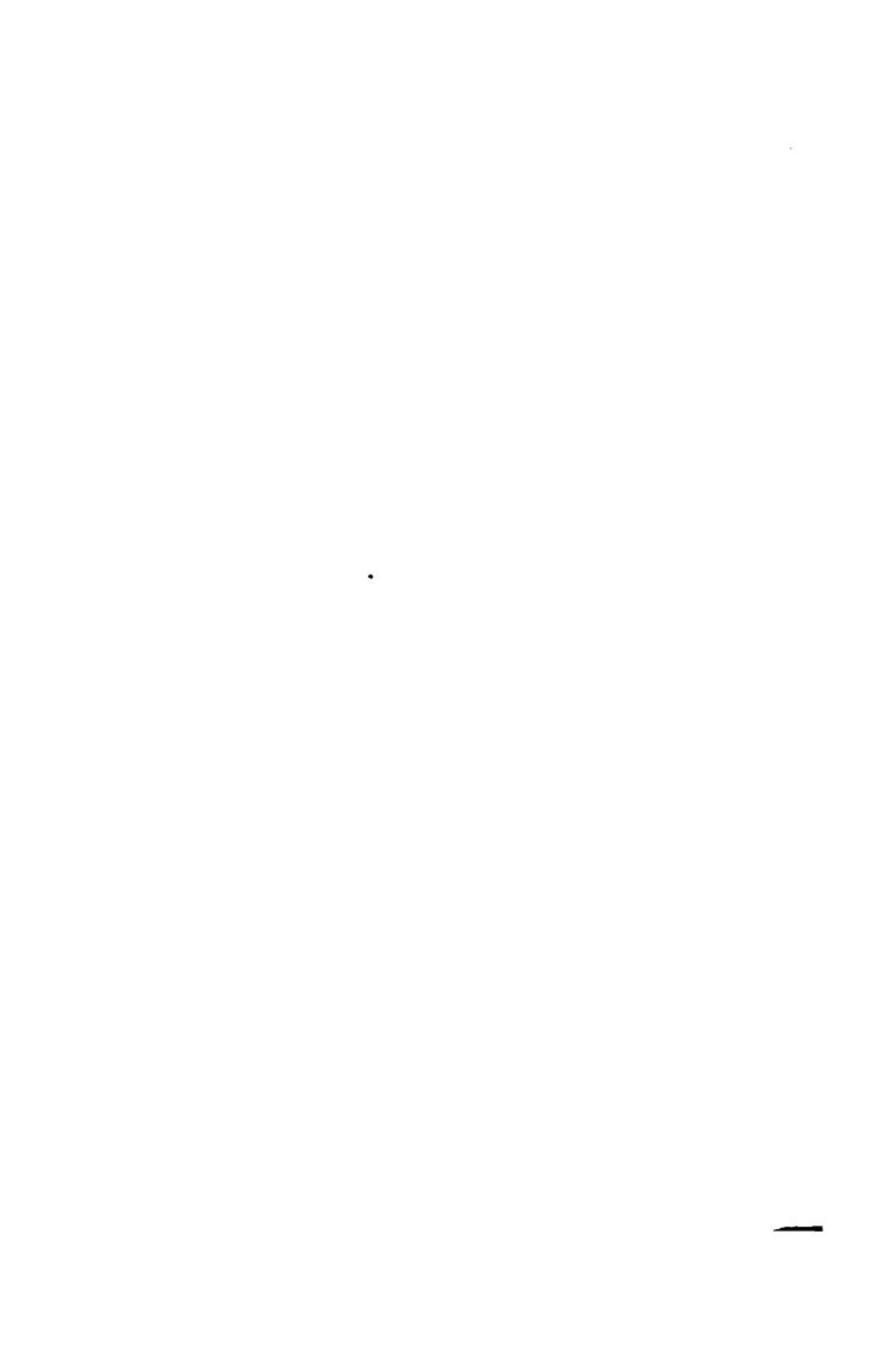
with her, on three or four occasions, that we have taken the poor child into our house each time until she has, by her own choice, returned; when her cruel mistress, who is said to be her grandmother, has promised us not to repeat her violence.

The other was a more distressing case. A woman residing in a house adjoining our own had lost seven piastres, and discovering that a little grandson had stolen them, she sent for a man, by profession a *beater*, to chastise him. One of my boys heard this; and finding that by mounting a little ladder he could reach a window commanding the court of this woman's house, he did so, and immediately called to tell me that the report was a true one; that the man had arrived, and was tying the arms and legs of the poor child; but that his grandmother was standing by him. That being the case, I assured my boy that her only object could be to frighten the child by confining his limbs, and that I felt certain she could not suffer him to be hurt. I formed this opinion from my love for the grandmothers of England, whose children's children are the crown and glory of their age. Alas! for my mistake in supposing this Arab possessed the feelings of woman's nature! I hardly left the foot of the ladder, when I was recalled by the screams of my own dear child, who was crying and scolding in an agony of distress; for the man in the court below was beating the limbs,

the back, the chest of the poor little boy, as in writhing and rolling on the ground each part fell under the dreadful blows of a ponderous stick, while between each infliction the old woman cried "again!" This brutality could not be suffered, and my brother instantly sent one of our servants with such a threat of vengeance if they did not immediately desist, that the child was at once released, and quiet was restored to our house, but not tranquillity to our minds. This same wretched woman periodically laments the loss of her son, the father of this child, and fills the air with her discordant wailings regularly every alternate Monday. She has always been to us a most annoying neighbour, and is the more so now that we know the hypocrisy of her lamentations.

The Muslim ceremonies that have reference to the dead are, however, generally very interesting ; and their wailings would always be deeply affecting, were they always sincere, and not confined to stated periods ; for they seem to express the most intense, heart-breaking, despairing grief. The art of wailing in the most approved style appears to be an accomplishment that can only be acquired by long practice ; and regular professors of it are usually hired on the occasion of the death of a person of the middle or higher classes. These accompany their lamentations with a tambourine, and occasionally interrupt their screams by plaintive

songs. Their performances, and those of the female mourners in general, are such as were practised in most remote ages ; such as we see portrayed upon the walls of the ancient Egyptian tombs, and such as are mentioned in many parts of the Holy Scriptures ; as in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 ; Jerem. ix. 18 ; Amos v. 16 ; and St. Matt. ix. 23 ; vividly bringing to mind “the minstrels and the people making a noise” for the death of the daughter of Jairus. As illustrative of the Bible, these and other Eastern customs are to me most especially interesting. “Consider ye,” says Jeremiah, exhorting his countrymen to bewail their disobedience, “and call for the mourning women, that they may come : and send for the cunning women, that they may come : and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters :” and by the same means the feelings of a mourning Eastern family seem to be most powerfully excited in the present day, for, in general, the most piercing cries and screams that I hear, on account of a death, are those which interrupt the lamentations of the hired mourner, who is “cunning” in her art. The cemeteries in the neighbourhood of Cairo are among the most picturesque of the various scenes which surround us ; and in these are many private burial-grounds, each belonging to one *family*, who, if of sufficient wealth, have within





Tomb.

its walls a house of mourning. To this house the females of the family regularly repair at the period of each of the two great annual festivals, as well as on extraordinary ones, to bewail their dead ; having previously sent thither such furniture as is necessary for their comfort ; and there they remain, on the occasions of the two festivals above mentioned, and immediately after a death, three or more days and nights. Some of the houses of mourning are pretty and cheerful-looking buildings, and enlivened by a few trees and flowers ; and I believe that the women often find no small pleasure in visiting them ; their life being in general so monotonous. Some women, who have not houses in the burial-ground for their reception, have tents pitched for them when requisite.

Yesterday we spent some hours at the Southern cemetery, which is adjacent to the city, but within the confines of the desert ; and were much interested in examining the tombs of the family of Mohammed 'Alee. The tombs in the cemetery exhibit a strange mixture of various tastes and dimensions : some are in perfect repair, substantially and well built ; others are of more fragile kinds ; though many of the smaller monuments are composed entirely of white marble ; but the most picturesque are the most ancient ; displaying exquisite taste in their general forms, and more especially in their domes and minarets, and their

arabesque decorations; these are of yellow limestone, here and there relieved by columns of white marble. The building containing the tombs of the Páshá's family is surmounted by several domes, but is low, and in no respect deserving of much admiration. How can I tell you of the cheerful appearance of the] interior? Two noble] saloons are filled with tombs at nearly equal distances: these are cased with white marble, and most gorgeously decorated with gilded and painted carved work. The floors are covered with beautiful carpets, and the scene has at once a complete air of gaiety and comfort. It has little that can lead the mind to the reflection that this is the resting-place of the dead. Such a variety of gay colours, and such varied forms meet the eye, that if the consciousness intrude that it is a sepulchral building, it is soon banished by the speculation as to which tombs may be considered more splendid than those around them. We generally gave the preference to that of the mother of Nezleh [Hánum, and of Mohammad Bey Deftardár: the latter, I think, bears the palm.

The tombs are generally about eight feet long, and four high; and on the top of these is placed an oblong slab, about a foot thick: the upright slabs at the head and feet are eight or ten feet high; and on that at the head is a representation of the head-dress of the deceased, carved in

stone, and painted. There are four unoccupied tombs in the principal saloon, raised, but not decorated. The embellishments altogether are such as only suit saloons appropriated to festivity. Turkish taste is ill calculated for decorating the abodes of the living, and does not apply at all where quiet and solemn effect is indispensable. It is not so with regard to Arabian taste: the Turkish is gaudy and florid: the Arabian is chaste and elegant, as much in domestic architecture as in the construction and decoration of sepulchres and mosques.

I felt that I could at any time spend a day in the saloons above mentioned, admiring the beauties of the place, with much personal comfort, and without the frequent intrusion of any melancholy reflection.

In a charming house, adjoining the tombs, appropriated to the use of the hareem of the keeper, we paid his ladies a visit, and were welcomed with true Eastern hospitality. The chief lady, who was handsomely attired in scarlet cloth, embroidered with gold, is a kind agreeable person, but woefully mistaken in her manner of training the dispositions of children. Two little babies belonging to the hareem were brought in to show us: the eldest, a boy, could just walk; and as soon as he made his appearance, the chief lady called for a stick, that puss, who was quietly crossing the carpet, might

be beaten for his amusement.. Not being aware that the beating was not to be in earnest, I interceded for the cat; when my acquaintance replied mysteriously, "I like her very much, I will not hurt her." Accordingly, she raised her arm with considerable effort, and let it fall gently. She next desired one of her slaves to kneel, which the girl did most gracefully, and bent her head with an air of mock submission, to receive the kurbáj ; and the same farce was performed. Though neither slave nor cat was a sufferer on the occasion, the effect must have been equally bad on the mind of the child. Alas ! for the slaves and cats when he is big enough to make them feel !

LETTER XXV.

February, 1844.

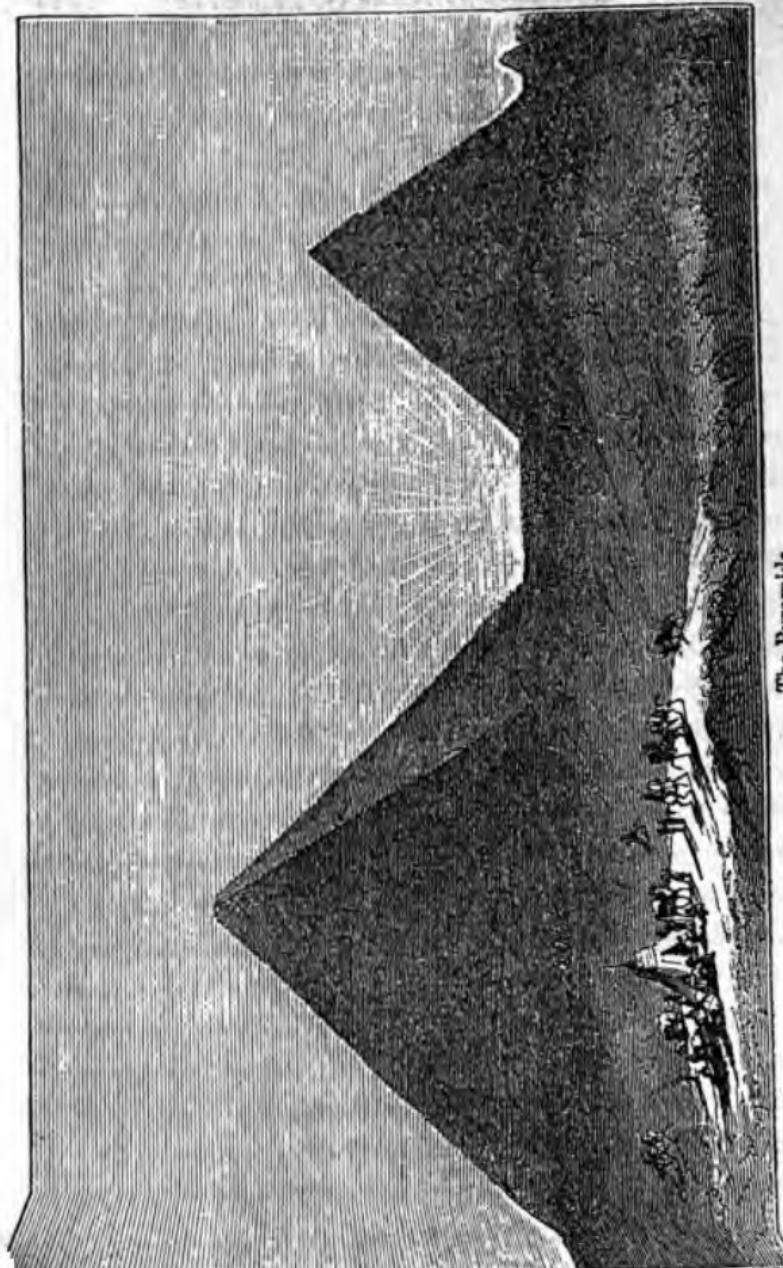
MY DEAR FRIEND,

ALTHOUGH so many have written of the pyramids, and a new description cannot fail to have something of the character of an often repeated tale, I find much that I must say respecting these stupendous monuments, the greatest, perhaps, of the Wonders of the World, which have been objects of our curiosity and astonishment even in the age of childhood, and the sight of which forms an era in one's life. I will, however, as much as possible, avoid troubling you with a repetition of what you have read, or may read, on this subject, in the works of various travellers.

Having arranged that, during our visit, we should spend our days in a sepulchral grotto, and our nights in a tent, we set out on this agreeable excursion with the most pleasing anticipations. The illusion so general in the East with regard to distance, occasioned by the extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere, is strikingly demonstrated in approaching the pyramids; it is very remarkable that the nearer we approached the objects of our

destination, the less grand and imposing did they appear. From their aspect, as I first drew near to them, I should have formed a very inadequate idea of their dimensions. As soon as we had crossed the river they appeared within a mile of us ; and after we had proceeded more than a league from El-Geezeh, I could scarcely believe that we were still a full league from the pyramids ; for the distance to them from El-Geezeh, by the route which we took, is more than six miles, though it is just five miles in a direct line. When we arrived within a mile of the pyramids, the illusion became greater : the courses of stone were then plainly discernible, and it was easy to calculate that they were not more in number than the courses of brick in a house about fifty or sixty feet high. These presented a scale by which the eye was much deceived in estimating the altitude of the structure ; being unaccustomed to the sight of stones of such enormous magnitude employed in building. But neither of these causes would be sufficient to produce such an illusion if there were any neighbouring object with which the pyramids might be contrasted. I was fully convinced of this when I arrived at the base of the great pyramid. It was then curious to observe how distant appeared those places where I had thought myself nearly at my journey's end. The clearness of the air would have deceived me then, as before ; but I was looking at

The Pyramids.



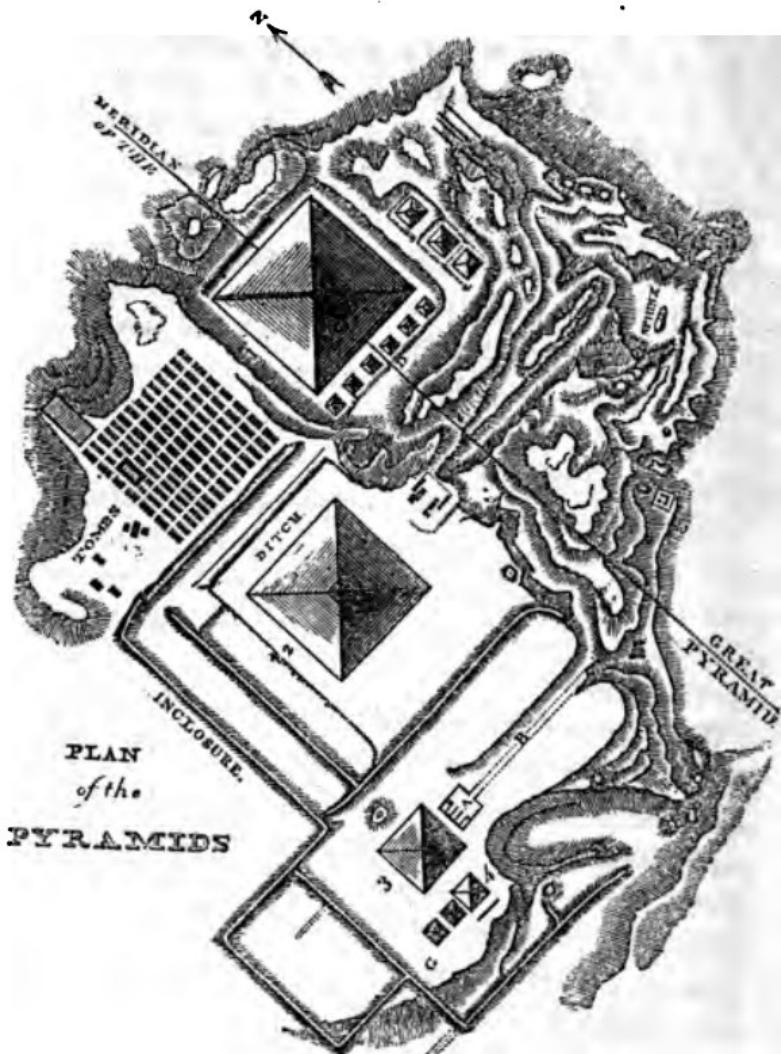
objects less strange to me; such as palm trees, villages, and the tents of Arabs.

A conspicuous object as we approached the pyramids was an old ruined causeway, most probably a part of that which was built by Kara-Koosh for the convenience of transporting stones from the pyramids to Cairo, when he constructed the citadel, and third wall of that city; and this portion may have been raised on the ruins of that which Herodotus describes, as the more ancient causeway was raised for the purpose of facilitating the conveyance of stones from the quarries on the eastern side of the Nile to the site of the Great Pyramid, to line the passages of that structure, and perhaps to case its exterior.

When we were at least a mile from our journey's end, I remarked to my brother, "The pyramids do not appear so grand as I expected now we are almost close to them." "Almost close to them!" replied he; "wait a little, and then tell me what you think." Accordingly we rode on; the provoking appearance of nearness to the objects of our visit surprising me during our whole approach. At this season it occupies three hours to reach the pyramids from Cairo, and this month, on account of its coolness, is particularly agreeable for such an excursion. A kind friend, Mr. Bonomi, well known for the length of time he has spent in this country, and his extensive acquaintance with its

monuments, was staying at the pyramids, and prepared for us a tent, and another comfortable place of abode, an ancient sepulchral grotto in a rock, which latter has served as the foundation of a pyramid, now for the most part destroyed. This excavation we found ample and airy, having three large square apertures, serving us as windows, besides the entrance. Our tent was pitched near it, our carpets spread, and our home in the desert had an air of comfort I had hardly anticipated. There is much that is homeish in carrying one's own carpet: place it where you will, in the boat or in the desert, your eyes rest upon it while thinking, and its familiar patterns afford a sort of welcome. The habit of placing the *seggádeh* (a small carpet) on the saddle enables an Eastern lady to take it wherever she may wander. When she is disposed to rest, her attendants spread it; and nothing is more refreshing during a desert excursion than to rest upon it, and take a simple meal of bread and fruit, and a draught of delicious Nile water.

As soon as possible after our arrival, we mounted the rock on which the pyramids are built, and there observed the effect I have described with regard to the objects we had passed on our way. From the brightness of their colour, apparently little changed by the thousands of years that have passed since their erection, the pyramids do not appear venerable: there is an appearance of freshness about



A, Remains of an antient building; B, Great causeway: D, Pyramids dilapidated; G, Pyramids with steps; 1, Great pyramid; 2, Second pyramid; 3, Third pyramid; 4, Fourth pyramid.

them which amazed me : but with regard to their wonderful magnitude, I found that I was no longer disappointed when I had ascended the rocky elevation on which they rest : when I was within a few yards of the base of the Great Pyramid, I was enabled to the full to comprehend its vastness.

We lingered late among the objects of our visit, and were interested in observing the enormous shadows of the two greater pyramids, stretching across the cultivated plain to the river, as the sun was setting. The general view from the rocky eminence on which they are built is the most imposing that can be conceived.

Returning to our grotto, we enjoyed our evening meal with the appetite of desert travellers, and went to rest with our minds impressed by reflections on what we had seen, and by the novelty of our situation.

We were not the only dwellers in tombs during our stay near the pyramids ; for a row of sepulchral excavations, which Colonel Vyse and his party occupied in 1837, are now inhabited by a Nubian, who has taken possession of them to afford lodgings (for a small remuneration) to travellers. Also at a short distance from our grotto, an Arab had taken up his abode in a similar but better tomb. Living there as a hermit, he is esteemed a *saint* by the people of the neighbouring villages, and is supported entirely by casual charity. Very

probably he has adopted the life of an anchorite because he is idle, and finds it easier to depend on others than to gain his own bread. It is common to see the Arabs on their way to leave a deposit of bread or other food, and sometimes money, with this recluse, more especially on Friday, when he receives numerous visitors.

My brother, during a long visit to the pyramids in 1825, occupied one of the tombs of which the Nubian has now taken possession. They are excavated in the eastern front of the rocky eminence on which stands the Great Pyramid. At that time a family consisting of a little old man (named 'Alee) his wife (who was not half his equal in age) and a little daughter, occupied a neighbouring grotto ; guarding some antiquities deposited there by Caviglia. Besides these, my brother had no nearer neighbours than the inhabitants of a village about a mile distant. The Sheykh 'Alee made himself useful in bringing water from a well which Caviglia had dug in the sandy plain, just at the foot of the slope before the grottoes. He was a poor half-witted creature, but possessed strong feelings, as was exemplified by an occurrence which happened during my brother's stay at the pyramids. One afternoon, his cook had sent old 'Alee's little girl to the neighbouring village to purchase some tobacco. The child not having returned by sunset my brother became uneasy, and dispatched a ser-

want to search for her, and bring her back. 'Alee had also become anxious, and had sent his wife for the same purpose ; but when the night had closed in, and he had received no tidings of the little girl, he became almost frantic : he beat his breast, stamped on the ground, and continued for sometime incessantly screaming, "Yá Mebrookeh ! yá Mebrookeh !" (the name of the child, signifying blessed.) After my brother had endeavoured for a little while to pacify him, he set off towards the village. About five minutes more elapsed, and my brother was sitting before the grotto, wondering that no one had returned, and that not even his two Bedawee guards had come as usual, when he was alarmed by loud and piteous cries in the desert plain before him. Leaving a servant in the grotto —for a strange youth was there—my brother ran towards the spot whence the voice seemed to issue. As it was dark, he could see nothing ; but after he had proceeded some distance, he heard the following words repeated very rapidly over and over again. "I testify that there is no deity but God, and I testify that Mohammad is God's apostle ;"—and soon he found poor old 'Alee lying on the ground. He told my brother that an 'efreet (or demon) had seized him by the throat, and thrown sand into his mouth, and that he was almost suffocated. (It seems that the Arabs are subject to a *spasm in the throat*, which they attribute to the

(above cause.) The two Bedawees, in the meantime, whom the servant and 'Alee's wife had engaged to assist them in their search, had found the child, and were, like my brother, drawn to that spot by the old man's cries. They helped him to walk back, but the poor creature had been so terrified and distressed, that for several days after he was quite idiotic.

On the second day after my brother had taken up his quarters at the pyramids, a young Bedabee—the stranger I have mentioned—claimed from him the rights of hospitality. He remained with him until he quitted his sepulchral abode, and, being a very clever and witty youth, amused him exceedingly, every evening while he was smoking his pipe, by reciting stories and verses from the popular romance of 'Aboo-Zeyd: but at the same time he gave much offence to my brother's Egyptian servants, by his contempt of the felláheen (or peasants). He had deserted from the Páshá's army of regular troops, as he frankly confessed; and was afraid to enter the villages, lest he should be recognized, and sent to the camp. When my brother was leaving the pyramids, he asked this young man what he would now do for provision, as he dared not enter the villages. He replied, "Who brought *you* here? God is bountiful."

On the occasion of our visit to the pyramids, my
and of our guards if they knew or

remembered poor old 'Alee, to which one of them replied that he was his son, and that he had been dead for some years. He then inquired whether Mebrookeh was living—"Yes," answered the man, "she is well and married, and the mother of two children." He went on to assure my brother he remembered his former visits well, and there was something satisfactory in the prospect of being guarded by one man, at least, who, for old acquaintance sake, might be on the alert. This man, though especially remarkable for his honesty, is not distinguished for his social virtues—he has married ten wives, and says he would marry twenty if he could afford to do so; asserting that although he has divorced several, he has only done so because they deserved it, for that they failed in their duty to him, notwithstanding his kindness to them. According to his own account, he was always good to them; he never reviled, but *only* beat them! The facility of divorce is a prodigious evil; often productive of want and misery. It is sadly common to find wives rejected for some trifling offence; when a kind admonition would have shown them all that had been amiss in their conduct, and would have rendered them valuable helpmates. I grieve to say that wives here are generally divorced merely from caprice.

Our guards, three in number, were remarkably picturesque objects; more like Bedawees than like

peasants ; belonging to a tribe which, not many years ago, exchanged the life of desert-wanderers for that of agriculturists ; and having retained the dress of their fathers, which consists chiefly of a loose shirt, and a kind of blanket, which envelops the body, and gives to the wearer an appearance quite primeval. It was at first amusing, but at last very tiresome, to hear these men calling to each other during the whole night, as though they feared their companions might be asleep : their constant repetition of, " Open your eyes ! open your eyes well !" effectually kept us watching also. One guard lay outside the tent, close to my head, and amused himself by singing constantly. I should have been very happy if something more substantial than canvass had separated me from such a lively neighbour. We rose in the morning fatigued, but the invigorating desert-air soon revived us ; and we set out on our adventures with becoming energy.

The bed of rock on which the Great Pyramid is situated is about one hundred and fifty feet above the sandy plain which intervenes between it and the cultivated land. It is a soft testaceous lime-stone, abounding particularly with those little petrifications described by Strabo as found in great quantities around the pyramids, and supposed to be *petrified lentils*, the leavings of the workmen who built the pyramids ! These abound in many parts

of the chain of mountains by which the valley of the Nile is confined on this side. The stone, when newly cut, is of a whitish colour; but, by exposure to the air, it becomes darker, and assumes a yellowish tint. The level parts and slopes of the rock are covered with sand and pebbles and fragments of stone, among which are found pieces of granite and porphyry, rock crystal, agates, and abundance of petrified shells, &c.

The Great Pyramid is that which is described by Herodotus as the work of a Pharaoh named Cheops, whom Diodorus Siculus calls Chemmis. Diodorus adds, that some attributed this pyramid to a king named Armæus. According to Manetho (a better authority in that case), it was founded by Suphis, the second king of the Fourth Dynasty, which was the second dynasty of the Memphite kings.

Colonel Vyse's most interesting discoveries of the hieroglyphic names of the royal founders of the first and third pyramids afford remarkable confirmations of the truth of the statements of Manetho and others respecting these monuments. The name of the founder of the Great Pyramid in hieroglyphics, according to the pronunciation of different dialects is Shofo, or Khofo: the former nearly agreeing with the Suphis of Manetho, the latter with the *Cheops* of Herodotus.

The height of the Great Pyramid is not much

greater than that of the second : the former having lost several ranges at the top ; while the upper part of the latter is nearly entire : but the base of the former is considerably larger ; though the difference is not very remarkable to the eye, and in the solidity and regularity of its construction, it is vastly superior.

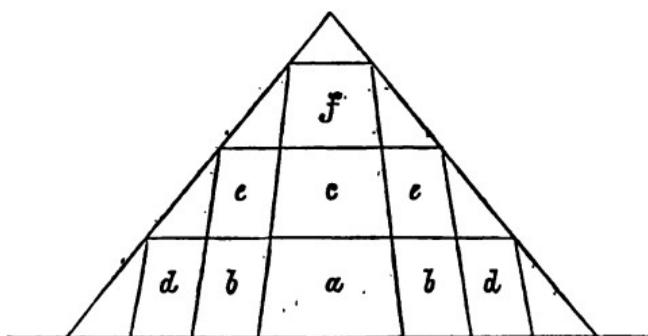
The pleasure which is felt by the modern traveller in surveying the pyramids is not a little increased by the consideration of their venerable antiquity, and the reflection that many philosophers and heroes of ancient times have in like manner stood before them, wrapt in admiration and amazement. The stupendous magnitude of the Great Pyramid is most clearly apparent when the observer places himself near one of its angles. The view of the pyramid from this point, though the best that can be obtained, cannot convey an adequate idea of its size ; for a gap in the angle, which appears to be near the summit, is not much more than half-way up. Thus greatly is the eye deceived by this extraordinary object.

Each side of the base of the Great Pyramid is seven hundred and thirty-three feet square, and the perpendicular height is four hundred and fifty-six feet, according to my brother's measurement. It consists of two hundred and three courses, or layers of stone ; therefore the average height of a single

course is about two feet and a quarter : but the courses vary in height from about four feet to one foot. The lower courses are higher than the rest ; and the lowest is hewn out of the solid rock ; as is also part of the second. Opposite the angle from which my brother's view was taken, about twelve feet distant, is a square place, twelve feet in width, and between two and three inches in depth ; apparently marking the place of the original corner-stone of the pyramid. About the middle of each side of the pyramid, the exterior stones have been much broken by the masses which have been rolled down from above ; but at the angles they are more entire, and *there*, consequently, the ascent is not difficult. The upper and lower surfaces of the stones are smoothly cut ; but the sides have been left very rough, and in many cases, not square : the interstices being filled up with a coarse cement, of a pinkish colour. This cement is, in some parts, almost as hard as the stone itself ; and sometimes very difficult to detach. Among the dust and small fragments of stone which have crumbled away from the sides and yet rest upon the upper surfaces of the steps, or exterior stones, we find a great number of the small petrifications in the form of lentils, which I have before mentioned.

Dr. Lipsius lately gave, at a meeting of the *Egyptian Society* in this city, a very interesting

account of the mode in which the Great Pyramid, and similar monuments, appear to have been constructed, as suggested by Mr. Wild, an English architect, accompanying the Doctor. The following engraving will explain the description of the system which appears to have been adopted :—



A structure of moderate size, *a*, with its sides slightly inclining inwards, containing, or covering the sepulchral chamber, and with a flat top, was first raised. Then a structure, *bb*, of the same height as the former, with its exterior sides similarly inclined, and its top flat, was raised around. Next, another structure, *ee*, was raised on the first. Another circum-structure, *dd*, was raised around that marked *bb*; then another, *ee*, around the structure *c*, then another structure, *f*, upon the latter. After this manner, the building probably continued to increase (like the royal tombs at Thebes) as long as the founder reigned. The structure was finished, as Herodotus

says, from the top downwards. A small pyramid being constructed on the top, occupying the whole of the highest platform, and the angles formed by the other platforms, and the sides of the structures against which they were built being filled up, the simple pyramidal form was made out. The several platforms composed convenient ample stages on which to raise the massive stones employed in the construction. This mode of construction was certainly practised in some of the pyramids, and most probably in all, excepting those of very small dimensions. That the Great Pyramid and others originally presented plane sides has been proved by Colonel Vyse.

On each side of the Great Pyramid is an accumulation of fragments of stone and mortar which have fallen down from the summit and sides of the building, and have composed a very compact mass, which rises, in the centre, to about fifty feet above the base. The sand of the desert has contributed but little to augment these slopes of rubbish, which are nearly of the same height on each side of the pyramid. That on the northern side forms a convenient acclivity to the entrance.

The ascent to the summit of the Great Pyramid is not dangerous, though rather tedious, as the description of the exterior must have shown. At, or near, any of the angles, there is, on almost

every course, or range of stones, a secure and wide footing ; but some of the steps are breast-high ; and these, of course, are awkward masses to climb. I had fully determined to attempt the ascent ; but the wind was so high during the period of our visit, that I dared not do so. On some other occasion I hope to be more fortunate.

Many stones have been thrown down from the top of the Great Pyramid, which consequently wants about twenty-five feet (or perhaps something more) of its original height ; for, without doubt, it terminated in a point. It appears, therefore, that its original height was, at the least, four hundred and eighty feet. It is worthy of remark that Diodorus Siculus describes the top of the pyramid as being six cubits (or nine feet) square ; Pliny states it to have been, in his time, twenty-five feet ; or, according to some copies of his work, fifteen feet ; the latter of which readings must be considered the more correct. Several courses of stone have been thrown down in later ages ; so that now, on arriving at the summit, there is a platform thirty-three feet square, upon which, near the eastern edge, are a few stones yet remaining of two upper courses. Upon these the names of many travellers are cut. The platform is quite flat ; the stones being well joined and cemented. The ascent

to the summit generally occupies between fifteen and twenty minutes.

The view from the summit of the Great Pyramid is described by my brother as being of a most extraordinary nature. On the eastern side the eye ranges over an extensive verdant plain, watered by numerous canals, and interspersed with villages erected upon mounds of rubbish, and surrounded by palm-trees. In the distance is the Nile; beyond which are seen the lofty minarets and citadel of Cairo, backed by the low yellow range of Mount Mukattam. Turning towards the opposite side, the traveller beholds a scene exactly the reverse: instead of palm-groves and corn-fields, he sees only the undulating sandy hills of the great Syrian Desert. The view of the second pyramid, from this commanding situation, is extremely grand. A small portion of the third pyramid is also seen; with one of the small pyramids on its southern side. The space which lies on the west of the Great Pyramid, and north of the second, is covered with oblong tombs, having the form of truncated pyramids; which from that height appear like patches of gravel. The head of the Great Sphinx, and the distant pyramids of Aboo-Seer, Sakkárah, and Dahshoor, are seen towards the south-south-east.

About half an hour or more after sunset, the

gloom contributed much to the grandeur and solemnity of the scene. On one occasion my brother ascended the Great Pyramid about two hours before daybreak, and waited upon the summit until sunrise. He found it extremely cold, and the wind, sweeping up the northern side of the pyramid, sounded like a distant cataract. The second pyramid was at first faintly discernible, appearing of vastly more than even real magnitude. Soon after, its eastern side was lighted up by the rising moon ; and the effect was truly sublime.

On the second day after he had taken up his quarters at the pyramids, during the visit to which I have referred, he went out without his pistols ; and in the evening one of his guards reproved him for having done so. "How easy," he observed, "would it be for one of our people (the Bedawees) to rob you, and, if you resisted, to murder you, and throw you down one of the mummy-pits, and who would ever know what was become of you ?" On the following day he ascended the Great Pyramid alone, but not unarmed. While on the summit, he perceived a solitary Arab, making towards the pyramid, from the west. He began to ascend the south-western angle, and when he arrived about half-way up, little thinking that my brother's telescope was directed towards him, he stopped, and took out a pistol from a case which was slung by

his side; looked at it, and then continued the ascent. As it was evident that the fellow had no good intentions, my brother called to him, and desired him to descend; but he either did not hear him, or would not obey. My brother then discharged a pistol, to show him that he was not without the means of defence. Upon this, he immediately began to return, and, having reached the base, walked slowly away into the desert.

Under the present government, travellers seldom are subjected to any danger from the natives in this or any other part of Egypt; but from the crowding and importunity of the Arab guides at the pyramids they generally suffer much annoyance. They are always attended for a considerable distance, sometimes even from El-Geezeh, by a party of Arabs who are in the habit of extorting money from the traveller on the top of the Great Pyramid before they will suffer him to descend. A few days ago, a gentleman of distinction bargained with some of these men to attend him to the summit of the Great Pyramid; and when they had done so, they claimed the promised payment, saying that they had fulfilled their engagement. Being afraid to descend without their aid, he was compelled to submit to their exactions, and paid them five dollars.

It is pitiable to observe the haste which most of

the travellers to and from India are obliged to make, if able to visit the pyramids at all : some arrived during our stay, ran up the Great Pyramid, descended as rapidly, spent a few minutes within it, and disappeared in a little more than an hour.

LETTER XXVI.

February, 1844.

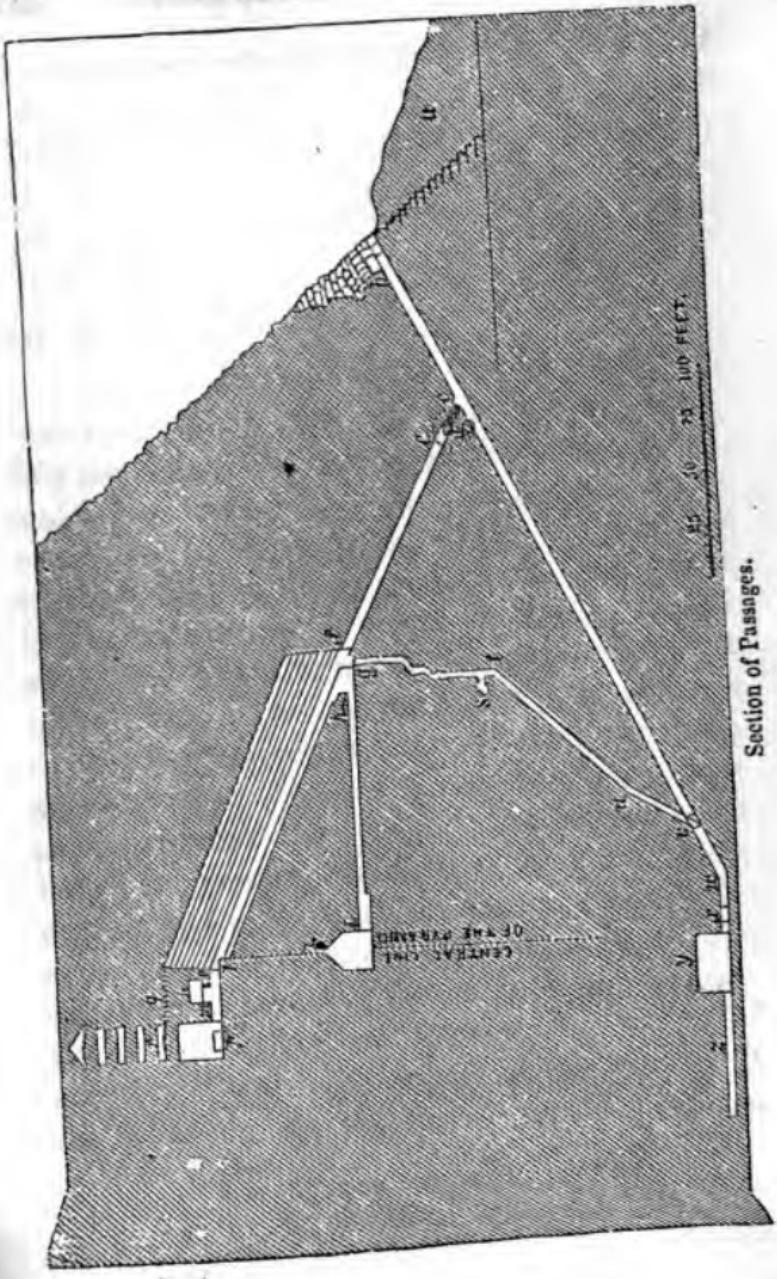
MY DEAR FRIEND,

THE entrance of the Great Pyramid * is over the sixteenth course, or layer of stone, about fifty feet above the base ; a slope of rubbish, as I said before, leading up to it.† It is nearly in the centre, or equidistant from either angle of the northern side of the pyramid : the eye would hardly discover that it is not *exactly* so ; though really twenty feet, or rather more, to the eastward of the centre. The opening of the pyramid seems to have been attended with considerable difficulty ; a vast number of stones having been torn down above and before the aperture. An inclined plane before the entrance forms an angle of twenty-six degrees and a half with the horizon, being in the same place with the floor of the first passage. The size of the stones above the entrance, and the manner in which they are disposed, are worthy of remark. There is no granite at the entrance of the pyramid ; all the blocks are of limestone.

* See *b* in the accompanying section.

† See *a* in the section.

Section of Passages.



Before the traveller enters the pyramid, he should divest himself of some of his clothes (for the heat of the interior is oppressive) and resume them immediately on coming out, to prevent any check of perspiration. The passage by which we enter the Great Pyramid is only four feet high, and three feet six inches (almost exactly two ancient Egyptian cubits) in width, and we are consequently obliged to descend in a crouching position. It is lined above and below and on each side with blocks of limestone,* of a more compact kind than that of which the pyramid is mainly constructed. This superior kind of stone appears to have been brought from the quarries on the eastern side of the Nile, directly opposite the site of Memphis; for stone of the same quality is not found nearer; and Herodotus, and several other ancient writers, inform us that the quarries of the Arabian mountains † supplied materials for the construction of the pyramid. Indeed, they assert that the pyramid was entirely built of stones from these quarries; but this, evidently, was not the case: the stone of which the structure is mainly composed was quarried from

* Some travellers, their memories deceiving them, have described this passage as lined with *granite*; others have asserted that it is of *white marble*.

† The mountains on the east of the Nile are so called by ancient Greek and Roman writers, and those on the west the “*Lybian Mountains*.”

the rock in its neighbourhood. The nicety with which the stones are united in the sides of the first passage is very remarkable. In some parts the joint cannot be discerned without a close and minute examination. In the flooring of this passage, and of all the sloping passages in this pyramid, notches have been roughly cut, like steps, to prevent the feet from slipping ; but I found them very far from producing the desired effect, being now polished by the naked feet of the guides. These notches have been the work of modern explorers. At the distance of nearly seventy feet (measuring from the outer surface of the huge block above the entrance) we find that one of the stones which form the roofing of the passage has been hewn away precisely at the point where the second passage branches off in an ascending direction (see the letter *c* in the section). Here we discover the square end of a granite block, which closes the entrance of the second passage, being exactly fitted to fill up the aperture. The persons who opened the pyramid, being unable to remove this obstacle, have made a forced communication with the ascending passage. At the distance of eighty feet (from the entrance of the pyramid) is the forced aperture, on the right side of the passage (see *d* in the section). It has been made by hollowing out the roofing, and cutting away the upper part of the side of the lower passage.

Here the explorer must light his candle (if he have not done so before), and having ascended through this opening, finds himself in a large place, which appears like a natural cavern in a rock. We now see the upper end of the granite block before mentioned, or of a second block. Above it is another, of which a part has been broken off. Above this the passage (*e f*) is seen clear of other incumbrances, running upwards, but in the same southern course as the first, or descending passage. It is of the same dimensions as the first, and has the same inclination ; but its sides and roofing are very rough, and consequently it has the appearance of having been cut through solid rock, which is not really the case. It is a hundred and nine feet long (measuring from the southernmost of the granite blocks above mentioned), and the flooring projects a foot and a half in the same direction. The ascent of this passage is rather fatiguing. On emerging from it, we find ourselves at the foot of the Grand Passage (see *f m* in the section).

This great passage, ascending to the principal chamber, is, in comparison with those which lead to it, wide and lofty. Its length being great, and its sides and every part of it blackened, as if by smoke, the further extremity was invisible to us as we stood at the lower end ; and its whole appearance singularly imposing. On our right, as we stood here, we observed the entrance, or mouth, of

what has been called "the well" (*g*). There we also, at the lower end of the Grand Passage, remarked some Arabic inscriptions, rudely cut with a chisel. These, I believe, were first noticed by Sir Gardiner Wilkinson. My brother read them to me thus—"Ezbek and Beybars have been here." "Beybars and Kalaoon El-Elfee have been here." "Sultán Mohammad. . . . Sa'eed." These three persons were Memlook sultáns of Egypt, who reigned in the latter half of the thirteenth century, at which period, it appears, the Great Pyramid was open; if these inscriptions be genuine, which my brother is a little inclined to doubt.

Under the grand, ascending passage, runs another, which is horizontal, low, and narrow. The entrance of the latter (*h*) is fifteen feet three inches from the projection of a foot and a half before mentioned. This passage is three feet eleven inches high, and three feet five inches wide. I found almost as much difficulty in proceeding here as I had in ascending and descending the sloping passages; the dust and the heat together being here especially oppressive. It continues of the same dimensions to the distance of ninety-three feet. Here we find a descent of one foot eight inches in the floor; so that the remainder of the passage is nearly high enough for a person of middling stature to walk *along* it without bending down the head. At the distance of a hundred and ten feet nine inches (from

its entrance) it terminates (see *i* in the section) at the eastern corner of the north side of a chamber, which is nineteen feet long, and seventeen feet broad (see *k*). This has been called by some travellers the "Queen's Chamber;" from the supposition that the queen of the founder of the pyramid was buried in it. The roof is formed of long blocks of stone, leaning against each other. The height of the chamber, to the commencement of the roof, is thirteen feet and a half; and to the summit, about seven feet more. The floor, sides, and roof are constructed of the same kind of limestone as the passages. In the eastern end (not in the middle, but rather to the right) is a high and narrow recess, five feet wide at the bottom, but becoming narrower towards the top, like the sides of the Grand Passage. It is three feet five inches deep. Within it, four feet from the floor, is the entrance of a forced passage, four feet wide. At the commencement it is square, and smoothly cut; but further on it becomes irregular; and at the distance of fifty feet it terminates at a hollow space, wider and more irregular than the rest. In this chamber and forced passage there is little to detain us. We return to the Grand Passage.

Above the entrance of the horizontal passage which leads to the chamber above described, is a perpendicular (marked *h* in the section). This perpendicular, together with the height of the said

passage, is seven feet three inches. The flooring then ascends in the same direction as the other ascending passage ; at an angle of twenty-six degrees and a half. At the distance of three feet five inches is another perpendicular or step of only eight inches, above which the floor has the same inclination again ; and notches have been cut in it to facilitate the ascent, which is not easily performed unless without shoes. There is a bench of stone on each side all along the passage, and in the tops of these benches are oblong holes at short intervals : their use is unknown. The width of the passage (including the benches, which are one foot eight inches and a half square), is six feet ten inches ; about four ancient Egyptian cubits. The sides of the passage are composed of nine courses of stone from the benches upwards. The stone is of the same kind as that of which the lower passages are constructed. Some travellers have supposed it to be *white marble*, but no marble is found in any part of the pyramid. The two lower courses are even with each other, but each course above projects three inches beyond that below it ; and so does each corresponding course at the upper and lower ends of the passage. The length of the whole passage is a hundred and fifty-eight feet. At the distance of five feet and one inch before we reach the upper end, we ascend another perpendicular of two feet eleven inches. The floor beyond

is horizontal, forming a small platform (see *l* in the section). From this commences a horizontal passage three feet seven inches and a half in height, and three feet five inches and a half in width (see *m*). Within it, on the right, is the entrance of a forced passage, made in search for other chambers than those already known. At the distance of four feet five inches (from the entrance of the *true* passage), commences an open space above (see *n*), the upper part of which is nearly twice as wide as the passage, and nine feet eight inches in length : but the passage below is contracted again to its former height by a kind of portcullis, formed of two blocks of granite one above another, each one foot three inches thick ; these have been let down from the space above between two small projections on each side which form a pair of grooves. Beyond this, the passage (which is here of *granite*), is open as before, to the space above, and there are grooves for the reception of three other portcullises of granite, by which the architect thought that he should for ever prevent access to the mysterious chamber which contains the sarcophagus ; but these have been broken and their fragments carried away. The passage beyond (see *o*), is of its former dimensions, and continues so to the distance of eight feet five inches, its whole length, from the top of the Grand Passage, being twenty-two feet and a *minates* at the eastern extremity of the

north side of the Grand Chamber (see *p* in the section).

The dimensions of the Great Chamber are especially worthy of remark: the length is thirty-four feet four inches and a half; just twenty ancient Egyptian cubits; the width exactly half that measure. The height is about two feet more than the width. It is entirely constructed of red granite. Near the western end is the sarcophagus; which is also of red granite. It is seven feet and a half in length, three and a half in breadth, and the sides are half a foot thick. No hieroglyphics nor sculptures of any kind adorn it either within or without; its sides are perfectly plain and polished, and its form is simply that of an oblong chest, in every way rectangular. Its lid has been carried away, as well as its original contents; and we find in it nothing but dust and small fragments of stone. It has been much injured at one of its corners by a number of travellers, who have broken off pieces to carry away as memorials. When struck with anything hard, or even with the hand, it sounds like a bell. It rests upon a block of granite considerably larger than any of the other blocks of which the floor is composed.

Why was such an enormous mass placed there? The alabaster sarcophagus in the great tomb opened by Belzoni in the valley of Beebán-el-Mulook, at Thebes, closed the entrance of a deep descent of

steps, which has never been explored to its termination : the soft and crumbling nature of the rock through which it is cut rendering any attempt to clear it out extremely dangerous. The enormous mass of granite under the sarcophagus in the Great Pyramid may have been placed there for a similar purpose, or to cover the mouth of a vault or pit ; so that, in case any violater of the sacred edifice should succeed (notwithstanding the portcullises of granite), in effecting an entrance into the Great Chamber, he might, on discovering the sarcophagus, believe the object of his search to be accomplished. An excavation has been made (I believe by Col. Howard Vyse), beneath this huge stone, but it seems hardly to have been carried sufficiently far. The sides of the chamber are formed of six regular courses of granite blocks, which are united with the greatest exactness, and their surfaces are perfectly even and polished, without hieroglyphics or any other inscriptions or ornaments. In the northern side near the corner of the entrance is a small aperture, and opposite to it in the southern side is another. Col. Vyse discovered the termination of each of these, in the exterior of the pyramid : they seem to have been designed for the purpose of ventilation. The roof of the chamber consists of nine long granite blocks which extend from side to side. The half only of the stone at each end is seen, the other half re-

Returning from this chamber we stop at the platform at the upper end of the Grand Passage (see *l* in the section).* Here we observe at the top of the eastern wall (that is on the left of a person facing the end of the passage), at the height of twenty-four feet, a square aperture which is the entrance of another passage (*q*). Small notches have been cut at the corner all the way up, for the reception of the ends of short pieces of wood, which were thus placed one above another so as to form a kind of ladder. These have been taken away, and the ascent without them is difficult and dangerous. When my brother was here alone some years ago, two Arabs contrived to climb up by means of the little notches, and took with them a strong rope, the end of which he tied round him, and so they drew him up to the top. As soon as he was freed from the rope they demanded of him a present, threatening that if he refused they would descend and leave him there. Though my brother laughed at their threats, they would not for some minutes confess that they were joking. The passage in which he found himself is only two feet four inches square. It turns immediately to the right, and to the distance of a few feet it continues square and of the same dimensions as before, but

* There is a remarkable echo in this passage, on account of which it is a custom of travellers to fire a pistol or gun here.

much clogged with dirt; afterwards it becomes irregular both in direction and in the construction of its sides, and it was difficult for my brother to drag himself along it, while numbers of bats escaped from within and flew against his face. At the distance of twenty-four feet the passage terminates at the north-east corner of a large but low place (*r*). This chamber (if such it may be called) was discovered by Mr. Davison, who was British Consul at Algiers, and who visited Egypt with Mr. Wortley Montague in 1763 and 4, and it is called by the discoverer's name. It is directly above the Grand Chamber, and is of the same width as that chamber, but four feet longer. The long granite blocks which compose the roof of the lower chamber form the floor of this, and the first and last of these blocks are here seen entire. The upper surface of each of them is very rough, and they are not all of the same thickness. The roof also of this place is formed of long blocks of granite eight in number. The height is scarcely more than three feet. In the south-east corner is a small forced passage which ascends a few feet. The second roof above the Grand Chamber was made to secure the lower roof, which otherwise might have been broken down by the superincumbent masses. Col. Vyse discovered over Da
ver three others similar to it one above the uppermost of these

another with a pointed roof; and in making this discovery he made one of much greater importance, that of two hieroglyphic names, rudely inscribed as quarry-marks; one of them certainly the name of the founder, as before mentioned; the other, according to some, a variation of the same name; according to others, the name of a predecessor or successor of the founder.

I scarcely need tell you that I did not descend what is called the well. It was explored by Mr. Davison, and afterwards in 1801 by Col. Coutelle; but its termination and use remained involved in uncertainty and mystery, until it was cleared out in 1817 by Caviglia. On the right of the lower end of the Grand Passage two feet below the floor, are three low steps occupying a space of four feet and a half in length. Beyond them is the mouth of the first shaft which is two feet two inches square. Here are little notches roughly cut in the sides in which to place the fingers and toes, and as the space is narrow, a person *may* descend without the aid of a rope, as my brother did, but he found it difficult and dangerous to do so. The ascent is attended with less danger, and seems precisely like climbing a chimney. At the depth of a few feet it becomes very rugged and irregular, and continues so for nearly fifty feet. After descending rather more than sixty feet, an aperture is seen on the southern side, which is the entrance of a kind of

grotto (*s*) between five and six feet high, and about three times as long, turning to the right. It is hollowed out in a vein of coarse but compact gravel, and the well, in consequence of this vein, is lined with masonry for the space of a few feet above and below the grotto. Where the masonry ceases (*t*) the well takes a sloping direction and continues so to the bottom; but towards the bottom (see *u* in the section) the slope becomes more steep. All the sloping part is cut through the solid rock below the foundation of the pyramid, and is of a square form. At the bottom of the well (*v*) is a horizontal passage six feet long, communicating with the first passage, two hundred and twelve feet below the aperture by which ~~one~~ ascends to the second passage.

The first passage of the pyramid from the aperture last mentioned, continues in the same direction, and is of the same dimensions, but is cut through the solid rock, and is not lined with masonry. The aperture which communicates with the bottom of the well is two feet ten inches broad. It is on the right of a person descending the first passage. This passage continues in the same direction to the distance of twenty-three feet further (see *w* in the section), beyond which it is horizontal, and so low and incumbered with rubbish, that the explorer is obliged to draw himself along in a prostrate position of sixteen feet nine inches

there is a recess (x) on the right side three feet four inches deep, and six feet five inches wide. Four feet and a half beyond this, the passage terminates at the eastern extremity of the north side of a large excavated chamber (y).

The Great Excavated Chamber is nearly under the centre of the pyramid. It is twenty-seven feet broad, and sixty-six feet long. The roof is flat, but the floor is very uneven. At the entrance the chamber is fifteen feet high; towards the western end the rock rises perpendicularly half-way towards the ceiling, and there are masses of strange forms, but not altogether irregular, rising still higher, and nearly touching the top of the chamber. In the floor at the lower end is a wide hollow space nearly filled with rats' dung. Immediately opposite the entrance is a level passage (z), low and narrow, running towards the south; it terminates abruptly at the distance of fifty-five feet. The floor of the chamber is just a hundred feet below the level of the external base of the pyramid. It appeared evident to my brother that this great chamber was an unfinished excavation. Mr. Salt thought otherwise: "He had flattered himself that it would turn out to be that described by Herodotus as containing the tomb of Cheops, which was insulated by a canal from the Nile; but the want of an inlet, and its elevation of thirty feet above the level of the Nile at its highest point, put an end to this delusive

-idea." This great chamber was discovered by Caviglia, of whose operations in the Great Pyramid, and in the neighbouring tombs, an interesting account is given in the 19th vol. of the 'Quarterly Review.' After having explored the well, and endeavoured, in vain, to draw up the rubbish with which the lower end was filled, he turned his attention to the clearing of the first passage of the pyramid, which, until that time, had been supposed to terminate just below the aperture which communicates with the second passage. In the prosecution of this work (which was one of much difficulty, as the passage was choked with large fragments of stone), he discovered the communication with the bottom of the well, and, continuing his operations, soon after entered the Great Excavated Chamber.

Such is the description of all that is now known of the interior of the Great Pyramid. It has been calculated that there might be within this stupendous fabric, three thousand seven hundred chambers, each equal in size to the Sarcophagus Chamber, allowing the contents of an equal number of such chambers to be solid, by way of separation.* Yet this enormous pile seems to have been raised merely as a sepulchral monument, to contain, perhaps, one single mummy, not a particle of which now remains in the place in which it was deposited with

so much precaution;* unless there be yet undiscovered any other receptacle for the royal corpse than the sarcophagus in the Granite Chamber. Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus assert that the building of the Great Pyramid occupied about twenty years, and according to the former, a hundred thousand men—according to the latter three hundred and sixty thousand men—were employed in its construction.

The Great Pyramid is surrounded, on three sides, by almost innumerable tombs. On the east are three small pyramids; and on the same side, and on the west and south, are many oblong tombs, flat-topped, and with sides inclining inwards. Some persons who have been unreasonable enough to doubt whether the pyramids are sepulchral monuments, must, I think, be convinced of their error by the discoveries of Colonel Vyse: long before which, my brother found bones and mummy-rags in the principal pyramid of Sakkárah.

* Most ancient authors who have described this monument assert, in opposition to Diodorus, that its founder was buried in it.

LETTER XXVII.

February, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I FEAR that I might weary you if I gave you a description of the other pyramids as full as that of the first; and, as they are far less interesting, I would pass them over entirely; but a few remarks respecting them, some of which I owe to my brother, I do not refrain from offering, as I think they will interest you. It is no trifle, I assure you, for a woman to explore the interior of the Great Pyramid. My mind continued so impressed with the difficulties of this undertaking, for some time, that I could not forget them, even in my dreams. The examination of the others is somewhat less arduous.

The name of the founder of the Second Pyramid, commonly called that of Chephrenes, still remains involved in some degree of doubt. But in some of the tombs in the neighbourhood, we find a king's hieroglyphics, which, according to different authorities, may be read Khephré or Shefré; and it is probable that the king to whom

this name belongs was the builder of the pyramid in question.

This pyramid is but little inferior in magnitude to the first. From some points of view, it even appears more lofty, as it stands on ground about thirty feet higher than that on which the first rests, and its summit is almost entire. A large portion of its smooth casing remains on the upper part, forming a cap which extends from the top to about a quarter of the distance thence to the base. Notwithstanding this, Arabs often ascend to its summit; and many European travellers have done the same. In its general construction, this pyramid is inferior to the first; and its interior is less remarkable. By a sloping passage, similar to the first in the Great Pyramid, but cased with granite, and then by a long horizontal passage hewn through the rock, broken by two perpendicular descents, and sloping ascents, we reach the Great Chamber. This is similar in form to the "Queen's Chamber" in the Great Pyramid, and contains a plain sarcophagus of granite, among blocks of the same material lately torn up from the floor, in which the sarcophagus was embedded.

Several Arabic inscriptions are scrawled with charcoal upon various parts of this chamber. Most of these were written before the opening of the pyramid by Belzoni, and are nearly illegible; generally recording the visits of Arabs, and in the

modern Arabic characters. My brother could not find any date among them. From his manuscript notes, I copy the following observations respecting one of these inscriptions which has excited especial attention : consisting of two lines, written in the same characters as the rest, and with the same material, but not so imperfectly legible. "Belzoni particularly remarked these two lines, and took a Copt scribe to copy them ; but this man did not faithfully execute his task : he concluded that the second line was a continuation of the first, which is far from being certain, and gave a transcript in which he presumed to restore what was defective in the original. His transcript has been thus translated by Mr. Salame : 'The Master Mohammed Ahmed, lapicide, has opened them ; and the Master Othman attended this (opening) ; and the King Alij Mohammed at first (from the beginning) to the closing up.' This inscription has exceedingly puzzled the learned Orientalists of Europe ; and great pains have been taken to find out who was the king mentioned in it, and at what period he reigned. It unfortunately happens that the first line is almost wholly defaced ; a traveller having scribbled his name over it : the two first words, however, have not been written over ; and I must pronounce it very uncertain whether they are as in the transcript above-mentioned, and consequently, whether the inscription contain any mention of the 'open-

ing' of the pyramid.' But the second line, which is the more important, has not been defaced like the first; and the greater part of it is so plain that it can hardly be read otherwise than thus: 'El-Khaleel 'Alee, the son of Mohammad . . . , has been here ;' or, in the order of the Arabic words, 'Has been here El-Khaleel 'Alee, the son of Mohammad . . .' It is quite evident that the word which Belzoni's copyist makes 'el-melik,' or 'the King,' is a proper name. Another inaccuracy in the copy published by Belzoni is the omission of the word signifying 'son,' after 'Alee.' Thus we find that this inscription (instead of recording the visit of a king, or perhaps, even alluding to the opening of the pyramid) is probably nothing more than the Arabic scrawls which are seen in great numbers on many of the monuments of Egypt. It, and others similar to it, are of some interest, however, as showing that the pyramid was open at a comparatively late period."

The third pyramid, commonly attributed to Mycerinus, or Mencheres, was opened by Colonel Vyse, who found in it the mummy-case of its founder, bearing the hieroglyphic name of Menkare. This pyramid, though small in comparison with the first and second, its base being about three hundred and thirty feet, and its perpendicular *height about two hundred*, is a very noble monument. Its construction is excellent; and it was

distinguished by being partly, or wholly, cased with granite. Several courses of the granite casing-stones remain at the lower part. The chamber in which the sarcophagus was found, and the entrance-passage, are formed of granite ; and the roof of the former is composed of blocks leaning together, and cut so as to form an arched ceiling. The sarcophagus was lost at sea, on its way to England. The third pyramid was the first that I entered ; and highly was I gratified by the view of its interior, after I had summoned courage to crawl through its entrance, which was almost closed by huge masses of stone.

Adjacent to the pyramids which I have mentioned are several others ; but these are comparatively insignificant ; and I shall not attempt to describe them : nor shall I undertake to give you a detailed account of any of the numerous tombs to which I have before alluded. Most of these lie in a large space to the west of the Great Pyramid, and north of the second ; and are, with few exceptions, disposed in regular lines, from north to south, and from east to west ; their walls, like the sides of the pyramids, facing the four cardinal points. Some of them are nearly buried in the drifted sand ; and many are almost entirely demolished. Some contain no chambers above ground ; but have a pit, entered from the roof, descending to a sepulchral chamber. Others contain narrow chambers within

their walls, adorned with painted sculptures in low relief, representing agricultural and other scenes. Most of these are of the same age as the Great Pyramid. In one of them, which is of that age, are represented persons engaged in various arts, carpenters, makers of papyrus-boats (probably like the ark in which Moses was exposed), agricultural employments, the wine-press, eating, dancing, &c. Among the subjects in this tomb, we find two men sitting at a tray which is supported by a low pedestal, and loaded with food: one is holding a fowl in his left hand; and, with his right, tearing off one of the wings: the other is holding a joint, and about to bite off a piece. Each of these persons is almost naked: had they more clothing, they would exhibit a true representation of two modern Egyptians at their dinner or supper. There are also many sepulchral grottoes, excavated in the rock, in the neighbourhood of the pyramids. In one we find representations of the flocks and herds of the principal occupant, with the number of each kind: he had 835 oxen, 220 cows with their young, 2234 he-goats, 760 asses, and 974 rams. This interesting tomb is of the remote age of Khephré, or Shefre, before-mentioned. It is in the front of the rocky elevation on which the Great Pyramid stands, a little to the right of Colonel Vyse's quarters, facing the valley of the Nile.

Had I attempted a regular description of the pyra-



The Great Sphinx,



mids and the monuments around them, I should have begun with the Great Sphinx, which faces the traveller approaching the Great Pyramid by the easiest route from the south-east, and lies but a short distance from that route. Its huge recumbent body, and its enormous outstretched fore legs, are almost entirely buried in sand and rubbish. The head alone is twenty feet high. The face (which lays claim to be regarded as a portrait of Thothmes IV., whom many believe to have reigned during the bondage of the Israelites in Egypt, or shortly before or after, and who may have been the very Pharaoh in whose reign the Exodus took place) is much mutilated ; the nose being broken off. This loss gives to the expression of the face much of the negro character : but the features of the countenance of the ancient Egyptian, as well as the comparative lightness of complexion, widely distinguished him from the negro ; and the nose of the former greatly differed from that of the latter. At first the countenance of the Sphinx, disfigured as it is, appeared to me absolutely ugly ; but when I drew near, I observed in it a peculiar sweetness of expression, and I did not wonder at its having excited a high degree of admiration in many travellers. The whole of this extraordinary colossus was doubtless painted : the face still retains much of its paint, which is red ochre, the colour always employed by the ancient Egyptians to represent

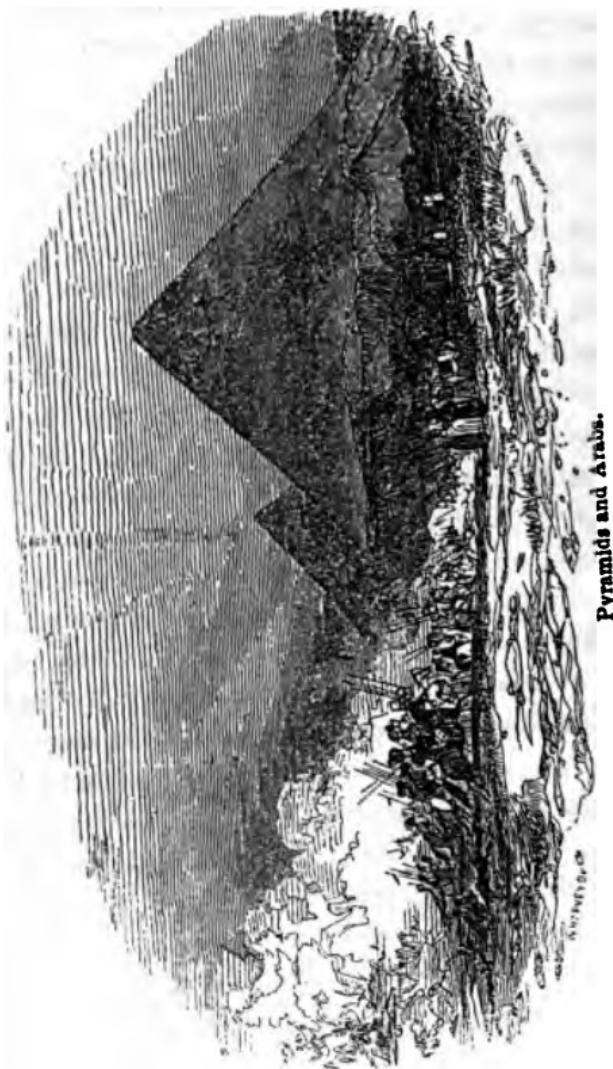
the complexion of their countrymen ; yellow or pink being used by them for that of the Egyptian women. All that is visible of the Sphinx is hewn out of a mass of limestone rock, which perhaps naturally presented something of the form which art has given to it.

I did not think to have written to you so much on the pyramids and the monuments around them ; but having entered upon the subject, I have found it difficult to stop. So wonderful in themselves are the principal pyramids, and so impressive by reason of their remote antiquity, that all other existing works of man must, I think, in comparison with them, sink into insignificance. I could hardly believe that monuments of such stupendous magnitude, and such admirable construction, were erected several centuries before the period of the Exodus, were it not for the fact that the Tower of Babel, probably an equally wonderful edifice, was raised in an age yet earlier.

During this excursion I was gratified by observing among innumerable Arabs belonging to the villages not a single instance of blindness, a calamity so common in Cairo. These peasants seem to enjoy a very small share of this world's goods ; but the exhilarating air usually blowing from the neighbouring desert has an extraordinary effect on their health and spirits.

On the morning before our departure several





Pyramids and Arabs.

well-dressed young Bedawees arrived near our tent, the sons of the sheykh of a distant village. After dismounting and loitering about for nearly an hour, they confessed to one of our party that they had ridden several miles in the hope of seeing the faces of some European ladies, who, they had been informed, were passing a few days at the pyramids, and they were seriously disappointed on finding veiled ladies only. A few weeks since these same young men enjoyed the treat of seeing an American lady who is travelling in Egypt, and who is a beautiful person. A friend of ours asked their opinion of the lady on that occasion, when they replied that her appearance was "excellent." "But," exclaimed one of the young men, "the sword! the sword! if we dared to use it, we would kill that man," alluding to the lady's companion, "whether her husband, or her brother, and take her ourselves." 'Tis well for pretty women travelling in the East that these lawless Arabs are kept under a degree of subjection by the present government.

LETTER XXVIII.

March, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You may have heard of a famous magician in this famous city of Cairo, who, though not supposed to be possessed of art equal to that of Pharaoh's wise men and sorcerers, has perplexed and confounded several of the most intelligent travellers, by feats very nearly resembling that performed by the Witch of Endor at the request of Saul. Having inscribed a magic square upon the palm of the right hand of any young boy or girl, and poured into the centre of it a little pool of ink, he pretends by means of the repetition of certain invocations to two spirits, and by burning some small strips of paper inscribed with similar invocations, in a chafing-dish containing live coals sprinkled with frankincense and coriander-seed, or other perfume, to make the boy see in this pool of ink the image of any person, living or dead, called for by his employer. My brother has fully described his performances as witnessed by himself and several other travellers more than ten years

ago,* the performances of which he was himself witness were not altogether inexplicable, for some of the persons called for were not unknown to fame, and the correct description of others might have been the result of mere guessing ; but the facts which he has related on the testimony of others have induced several persons whom I could name to believe them the effects of supernatural agency. The supposed mystery, however, my brother thinks he can now explain, at least so far as to satisfy any reasonable person respecting most, if not all, of the most surprising of the feats to which I have alluded.

A few weeks ago, he was requested by two English travellers, Lord N. and Major G., to witness the performances of this magician, and to act as interpreter on the occasion, in order that they might feel themselves secure from any collusion. But I must give you his own account of the exposure which this request occasioned.

"I was unwilling," he said, "to accede to the proposal made to me, and expressed a reluctance to do so ; but I am glad that I at last consented. The magician tried with two boys, and with both of them he utterly failed in every case. His excuse was, that the boys were liars, and described

* We reprint this account in the Appendix A, for without this extract from Mr. Lane's work on the 'Modern Egyptians,' his sister's narrative is unintelligible. Ed.

the objects which they saw otherwise than as they appeared to them ; that the feats were performed not by his own means alone, and that he was not secure from being imposed upon by others. Now if we admit that there is *still* such a thing as real magic, and we know from the Bible such was once the case, we must allow that by occasional failures this man does not show that he is not a true magician, as long as he employs an agent, upon whose veracity and particular qualifications he asserts the success of his performances to depend. Partly, perhaps, from feelings of mortification, and partly with the view of upholding his reputation by urging what he had done on former occasions, he remarked to me that he was successful in the days of 'Osmán Efendee, and that since the death of that person he had been unfortunate.

"This was indeed, for him, a most unfortunate remark. The inference to be drawn from it, that the person whom he named was the main spring of his machinery, was inevitable, more especially when I considered, that in all the instances of his surprising success of which I had heard, this person served as the interpreter; and when I further reflected, that since his death, which took place nearly nine years ago, hundreds of persons had witnessed the performances of this magician, *and I* had been assured that his successes had been *such as could not be said to be even the results of*

lucky guesses or mere accident, for he had almost always failed. I was at first unwilling to believe that a person whom I always regarded as an honest man, and whom I knew to have been possessed of many excellent qualities, had consented to be a means of imposition ; and I remembered that, in the performances which I had myself witnessed, I ascertained that he gave no direction either by word or sign ; that he was generally unacquainted in these instances with the personal appearance of the individual called for ; that I took care that he should have no previous communication with the boys ; and that I had seen the experiment fail when he *could* have given directions to them or to the magician. But the inferences to be derived from these circumstances, in favour of the magician, are surely outweighed by the facts which I have mentioned, resting not only upon the assertions of others, but also upon his own confession. 'Osmán perhaps considered it a light matter to practise such an artifice as that which is thus imputed to him, and perhaps was unwilling to practise it upon me, or feared my detecting him if he attempted to do so. Besides, if many of the performances of the magician had not been far more surprising than those which I witnessed, he would have gained but little notoriety. I satisfied myself that the boy employed in a case which I have mentioned in my work on the

'Modern Egyptians,' was not prompted for the part he played, by my having chosen him from a number of others passing by in the street; and I also felt satisfied that the images which he and another boy professed to have seen, were by some means produced in the ink by the magician, in consequence of their refusal to accept presents which I offered them, with the view of inducing them to confess that they did not really see what they proposed to have seen. As to the former point, I was doubtless right; but as to the latter, I now feel that I was deceived. I believe that the boys saw nothing, and that, having deceived me, they feared to confess the truth. Another difficulty, however, lies in the way of the explanation which I have proposed: two travellers (one of them M. Leon Delaborde, the other an Englishman), both instructed by the magician of whom I am speaking, are stated to have succeeded in performing similar feats. But is it not almost certain, after what I have said, that those feats were accomplished by means of the suggestions of the interpreter or interpreters? Perhaps the same person who interpreted in the other cases which excited so much surprise did so in those also.

"I have stated all that I can for and against the magician, and leave it for others to decide upon the case. For myself, I am satisfied that his successes are to be attributed chiefly to the interpreter,

but partly also to leading questions, and partly to mere guessing. Let us consider these three means as employed in one of the most remarkable cases. A number of individuals being called for, most of them (perhaps all), are correctly described. With the personal appearance of many of these individuals the interpreter is acquainted, and he is therefore able to suggest to the boy what he should say. When he has had no previous knowledge of the peculiarities of the appearance of a person called for, it has often happened that he has acquired such knowledge during the performance. One of the company, for instance, saying that he will call for such a person, adding that he is remarkable in such and such respects. When the first means cannot be employed, much may be done by the second, that is by leading questions. When a person having but one leg, or one leg shorter than another, is called for, he is perhaps vaguely described, and the boy is in consequence asked if there be anything peculiar in his legs: this question suggests to him that there is some peculiarity in his legs, and he probably ventures to say that he can only see *one* leg, then if this be unsatisfactory, he may add the person has turned round, and that he sees him to be *lame*. The third means (guessing) without the others is not likely to be of much service; but with them it may help to supply trifling deficiencies, and when the guessing is wrong

respecting a *trifling* matter, his *error* is considered trifling ; but when he is right, his description is often considered striking for its *minute* accuracy.

"The last performances of this magician in my presence were ridiculous for their complete want of success. A woman was described as a man, a tall person as short or middle-sized, the very old as of a middle age, and so on. Two boys were employed ; one was very stupid and appeared much frightened, the other seemed accustomed to the performance."

A friend has just described to me the latest performance of the magician, and you can hardly conceive anything more unfortunate and absurd. He had been sent for to gratify the curiosity of a party of English travellers at the French Hotel, a frequent scene of his impositions, where he often finds a boy ready to be employed by him, familiar with his tricks, and an interpreter disposed to aid his deceptions. A donkey-boy was sent for ; and after the usual preparations, Lord Auckland was named as the first person whose image was to be presented to the boy, in the mirror of ink. He was merely described as short and thin. O'Connell was next represented as short and thin, dressed in white, young, without a beard, wearing a white hat with a handkerchief tied round it (like a Frank endeavouring to preserve his head from the heat of an Egyptian summer sun), and having only one

hand. Several other persons were called for, relations of individuals present, with various success ; and much laughter was occasioned, which made the magician accuse the boy of not telling what he saw. Another boy was sent for ; and he seemed to have been employed previously : sometimes he got on before the magician. After many ridiculous failures, the Prince of Wales was described with white hair, yellow beard, black coat, and white trousers. (Beards, I should tell you, are worn here by many European travellers.) The party agreed not to laugh ; and the names of persons present were given as those of individuals whose images were required to appear. Sometimes the image described was right in being tall, but wrong in being fat : right as to coat, but wrong as to trousers : just as you would expect in cases of guessing. Five dollars were put upon a chair before the magician ; but he had the presence of mind to wait for more, which, I believe, he received. I assure you he reaps a fine harvest from the pockets of travellers.

If you wish to know what the performances of this man were in earlier times, in the most remarkable instances, read an account of them in No. 117 of the "Quarterly Review ;" and especially a note there, following the remarks of the reviewer. You will see, from what is there stated, that the subject was deemed worthy of serious consideration, and

that a discovery of the means employed by the magician, which were thought to be of a very ingenious kind, was regarded as an interesting desideratum. That these means were not merely leading questions, and the like, as a late writer has suggested, is evident when we reflect that the magician is not known to have been even generally successful on any single occasion since the death of the interpreter 'Osinán, and it is not likely that intelligent travellers (of whom many might be named) would have been at a loss for the explanation, if such means would have sufficed.

One further remark I must make on this subject. If we give to some persons that credit which they are believed to deserve, we must admit that excited imagination, in the child employed as an agent in the deception, has sometimes produced images in the mirror of ink ; but these images have been always such as the child *expected* to see. The successful performances have been supposed, by some, to have been effected by means of mesmerism ; and some have attributed them to diabolical agency. As the grandest discoveries in science are often the most simple, so what appears to us at first most unaccountable is often capable of the most simple solution.

LETTER XXIX.

April, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN I promised you a description of the Bath, I did not anticipate that I should enter upon the subject with pleasure. Whatever others may think of it, I confess that the operation of bathing in the Eastern manner is to me extremely agreeable ; and I have found it singularly beneficial in removing that lassitude which is occasioned by the climate. It is true that it is followed by a sense of fatigue; but a delightful repose soon ensues ; and the consequences, upon the whole, I find almost as enjoyable as the process itself.

The buildings containing the baths are all nearly on the same plan, and are much alike in appearance ; the fronts being decorated fancifully, in red and white, and the interiors consisting of several apartments paved with marble. I will describe to you, in a few words, one of the best in Cairo, which I visited with three ladies of my acquaintance,—English, Abyssinian, and Syrian.

After we had passed through two passages, we

found ourselves in the first large apartment, or chamber of repose, in which the bathers undress previously to their entering the heated chambers, and in which they dress after taking the bath, and rest on a raised marble platform, or wide bench, on which are spread mats and carpets. In the centre is a fountain of cold water, over which is a dome. For a detailed account of the public baths of Cairo I refer you to my brother's description ; and shall only relate to you the scenes through which I passed on the occasion to which I have referred.

In the first apartment, each of us enveloped herself in a very long and broad piece of drapery, —which, but for its size, I might call a scarf,—and proceeded through a small chamber, which was moderately heated, to the principal inner apartment, where the heat was intense. The plan of this apartment is that of a cross, having four recesses ; each of which, as well as the central portion, is covered with a dome. The pavements are of white and black marble, and small pieces of fine red tile, very fancifully and prettily disposed. In the middle is a jet of hot water, rising from the centre of a high seat of marble, upon which many persons might sit together. The pavement of each of the recesses is a few inches higher than that of the central portion of the apartment ; and in one of them is a trough, into which hot water was constantly pour-

ing from a pipe in the dome above. The whole apartment was full of steam.

On entering this chamber a scene presented itself which beggars description. My companions had prepared me for seeing many persons undressed ; but imagine my astonishment on finding at least thirty women of all ages, and many young girls and children, perfectly unclothed. You will scarcely think it possible that no one but ourselves had a vestige of clothing. Persons of all colours, from the black and glossy shade of the negro to the fairest possible hue of complexion, were formed in groups, conversing as though full dressed, with perfect *nonchalance*, while others were strolling about, or sitting round the fountain. I cannot describe the bath as altogether a beautiful scene ; in truth, in some respects it is disgusting ; and I regret that I can never reach a private room in any bath without passing through the large public apartment.

I will turn to the more agreeable subject—the operation of the bath, which is quite luxurious. The sensation experienced on first entering the hottest chamber is almost overpowering—the heat is extremely oppressive ; and at first I believed that I could not long support such a temperature ; but after the first minute, I was relieved by a gentle, and afterwards by a profuse perspiration, and no longer felt in any degree oppressed. It is

always necessary for each lady to send her own bathing-linen, a pair of high clogs, a large copper vessel for hot water, two copper bowls, and towels.

The first operation is a gentle kneading the flesh, or champooing. Next the attendant cracks the joints of those who desire to submit to this process. I confess I did not suffer such an infliction. Some of the native women after this are rubbed with a rasp, or rather with two rasps of different kinds, a coarse one for the feet, and a fine one for the body ; but neither of these rasps do I approve. A small coarse woollen bag, into which the operator's hand is inserted, is in my opinion preferable. Next the head and face are covered with a thick lather, which is produced by rubbing soap on a handful of fibres of the palm-tree, which are called leef, and which form a very agreeable and delicate-looking rubber. It is truly ridiculous to see another under this operation. When her head and face have been well lathered, and the soap has been thoroughly washed off by abundance of hot water, a novice would suppose that at least *they* were sufficiently purified ; but this is not the case : two or three of such latherings, and as many washings, are necessary before the attendant thinks her duty to the head and face accomplished. Then follows the more agreeable part of the affair,—the general *lathering* and rubbing, which is performed by the attendant so gently, and in so pleasant a manner,

that it is quite a luxury ; and I am persuaded that the Eastern manner of bathing is highly salubrious, from its powerful effect upon the skin.

When the operation was completed, I was enveloped in a dry piece of drapery, similar to the bathing-dress, and conducted to the reposing-room, where I was rubbed and dressed, and left to take rest and refreshment, and to reflect upon the strange scene which I had witnessed. I wish I could say that there are no drawbacks to the enjoyment of the luxury I have described ; but the eyes and ears of an Englishwoman must be closed in the public bath in Egypt before she can fairly enjoy the satisfaction it affords ; for besides the very foreign scenes which cannot fail to shock her feelings of propriety, the cries of the children are deafening and incessant. The perfection of Eastern bathing is therefore rather to be enjoyed in a private bath, with the attendance of a practised velláneh.

LETTER XXX.

April, 1844.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I REMEMBER writing, in my simplicity, that I believed Mohammad 'Alee Páshá to have but two wives; but having been introduced to another of his wives, the mother of Haleem Bey, in his hareem in the citadel, I conjecture that there is yet another, making the full Muslim allowance, namely, four wives.

The ride to the citadel is not an agreeable one, and at this time the ascent is attended with some danger, as the Páshá has directed the repair of the road leading from the Báb el Wezeer; in consequence of which heaps of stones and rubbish almost obstruct the way. I had chosen this route because it is unpaved, and my experience had made me dread the slippery paved entrance by the Great Gate, mounted, as I was, on a "high ass." Although expecting a tumble in riding over the rubbish, I could not help remarking the enormous size of some stones which had been thrown down from an old wall, so much resembling stones which lie scattered around the pyramids, that I do not doubt

they are some of those which were transported by Karakoosh when he was employed in building the citadel.

The Kasr appropriated to the hareem of the Páshá in the citadel is a noble mansion, the finest domestic structure I have seen in Egypt. The interior is on the usual Turkish plan. On the ground floor is a spacious saloon, paved with marble of a blueish white, nearly surrounded by suites of apartments which open into it; and on the first floor are rooms on the same plan. Accompanied by my friend Mrs. Sieder, I passed from the principal entrance to a large square court, and having crossed this, we found ourselves in the lower of the two saloons. We then ascended by an ample marble staircase to the saloon on the first floor. Here a most magnificent prospect burst upon our view: three windows which are opposite the head of the stairs, command the whole of Cairo, and the plain beyond; and every object of interest to the north and west of Cairo within the reach of our sight lay in picturesque variety before our admiring gaze; the green carpet of the Delta, and the plain of Goshen, terminating the view towards the north. I would willingly have lingered here, but our attendants were impatient to conduct us into the presence of the chief lady.

We found her sitting in a room which was carpeted and surrounded by a divan, attended by three

ladies. She received us with much respect and cordiality, and as I had been informed that she had the reputation of being an exceedingly haughty person, I was agreeably surprised by finding in her conversation and deportment the utmost affability and politeness. She conversed with me freely of my children, told me that her son was under twenty years of age, and introduced to my notice two nice little girls, children of the hareem, one of whom presented me with a *bouquet*. The subject of the number, health, and age of each lady's children is always the darling theme of conversation in the hareems, and truly to a mother ever agreeable. One lady asked me with perfect gravity, whether one of my boys, being thirteen years of age, was married. I conclude she meant betrothed, for the same word is used to express marriage and betrothal. I explained to her that, in England, a boy must become a man before he thinks of marriage, or even betrothal ; and that if he entered into the marriage state at twenty years of age, and a girl at fifteen, they would be considered too young. The lady whom I addressed, and her companion, listened with much attention, and one of them earnestly maintained that the English were quite right in objecting to such young marriages as take place constantly in the East.

With respect to the beauties in this hareem, I can only say that one was very remarkable ; and

among the ornaments that I saw there, there was nothing deserving of particular notice excepting the pearl necklaces of the chief lady and two others : these were composed of the largest pearls that I have ever seen, but nearly tight round the throat.

On quitting this hareem, I was conducted by the ladies with the ceremony I have not described, which was that of holding the háberah on each side, while I crossed the saloons, and until I reached the hareem curtain. These attendant ladies, in imitation of their superiors, vied with each other in paying us every polite attention, and each and all in the hareem of the citadel were pictures of cheerfulness and good humour.

I was informed that no Franks had ever before been admitted into this hareem, and I believe it to be the case ; though a portion of the same building, entered from the other side, and in which the Páshá has some rooms fitted up in the European manner, has been frequently seen by travellers. Some European ladies, a short time since, offered twenty dollars to procure admission, and were refused. I did not offer a bribe ; for I never have condescended to obtain access to a hareem through the servants, and have either been introduced by my kind friend Mrs. Sieder, or paid my visit without any explanation to the slaves, and have never met with the slightest opposition. On quitting, it is necessary

to give a present to the chief eunuch, or to the door-keeper.

After paying this visit, I called on my old friends, the hareem of Habeeb Efendee ; and I confess I approached their house with some apprehension that, instead of their usual hearty welcome, I might meet with a cold reception, during the present state of things, England and France having lately required of the Sultan a concession which every Christian must ardently desire, but which it is almost impossible for him, as a Muslim sovereign, to grant, and the result being not yet known, it was particularly agreeable to our feelings, in visiting his near relations, to find the whole family prepared to welcome us with even more than their usual affection. The ladies in that hareem being particularly well informed, the conversation during our visit takes always a lively, and often a political turn ; and as soon as we were seated yesterday, the passing events were discussed, and the question of liberty of conscience on religious subjects soon introduced. But here I must digress, to remark to you one circumstance which much pleased me. While I was in conversation with a lady who was sitting next to me, we both heard the whole company, consisting of the daughters and several visitors, suddenly rise, and, following their example immediately, I observed

that the chief lady was entering the room. Very delightful is this outward respect for parents, which is not here, as in England, confined to a few of the families of the great ; and when accompanied with that devotion of heart so evident in the conduct of the daughters of Habeeb Efendee. Their veneration for their amiable mother is complete ; while they are permitted by her, in their conversation and manners, to indulge in the sweetest familiarity of affection.

This good lady saluted us in her usual charming manner, and took her seat, placing me, as she always has done, on her right hand ; after which all resumed their places, and she listened with extreme interest to our conversation, which was translated to her into Turkish by her daughters. In common with all the Turkish ladies I have seen in this country, the wife of Habeeb Efendee speaks sufficient Arabic for the usual purposes of conversation ; but when any particularly interesting topic is discussed, they all like it explained in their own language.

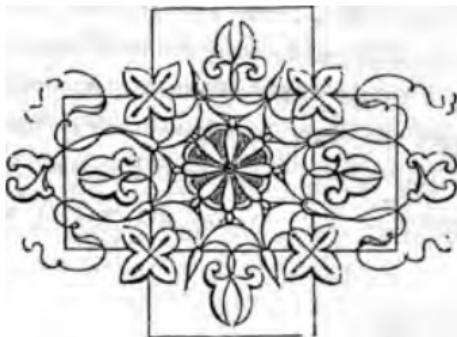
The eldest daughter requested to be informed particularly of the nature of the demand lately made by England and France on the Sultán ; and when it was explained that he was required to protect from martyrdom such persons who, having been originally Christian, had become Muslims,

and subsequently returned to their first profession, she replied, with an earnestness of manner which interested my friend and me extremely, “ It is but the fulfilment of prophecy ! When I was a little child, I was taught that, in this year, great things would commence, which would require three years for their completion.”

Surely she drew a beautiful conclusion, and under circumstances, too, of painful feelings to one strictly attached to the laws of her religion. And here I must faithfully observe, that I have not met with this lady’s equal in Eastern female society, in gentleness, sweetness, and good sense ; and, withal, she has decidedly a cultivated mind. The Hon. Mrs. Damer has very agreeably described this lady in her ‘Tour,’ and has particularly mentioned her affection for her mother. I must not omit to tell you of the curiosity of the whole hareem on the subject of Mrs. Damer’s book. They had been informed that she had described them, and questioned us closely on the subject. We had much pleasure in assuring them that the description in that lady’s work consisted in honourable mention of her reception by the hareem, and of their agreeable manners, and perfect politeness and cordiality. They inquired the exact period of her visit, that they might perfectly recall her to their recollection. Secluded as they are, they remember the visits of Europeans.

as eras in their lives ; and I am persuaded that they feel the pleasure they so agreeably express when we pay them a visit.

Mrs. Sieder has shown them the portrait of the present Sultán in Mrs. Damer's book ; and the eldest daughter has made a copy of it in colours, very creditable to a Turkish lady. It will doubtless excite great interest in every visiter of the family ; and, unless protected by a glass, it will perhaps, in the course of a few weeks, be kissed entirely away, like a miniature portrait of a Turkish grandee of which I was lately told.



NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

THIS Series of Letters somewhat abruptly terminates. The last letter, dated April, 1844, with several others, arrived from Cairo in May, and were delivered for publication. Since then, through some accidental circumstances, the communication has been interrupted. It is thought better to complete the volume with some illustrative matter, by way of Appendix, than to run the risk of any further delay.

August 23, 1844.

APPENDIX A.

[From Mr. Lane's 'Modern Egyptians.')

MAGIC.

A FEW days after my first arrival in this country, my curiosity was excited on the subject of magic by a circumstance related to me by Mr. Salt, our consul-general. Having had reason to believe that one of his servants was a thief, from the fact of several articles of property having been stolen from his house, he sent for a celebrated Maghabee magician, with the view of intimidating them, and causing the guilty one (if any of them were guilty) to confess his crime. The magician came; and said that he would cause the exact image of the person who had committed the thefts to appear to any youth not arrived at the age of puberty; and desired the master of the house to call in any boy whom he might choose. As several boys were then employed in a garden adjacent to the house, one of them was called for this purpose. In the palm of this boy's right hand the magician drew, with a pen, a certain diagram, in the centre of which he poured a little ink. Into this ink he desired the boy steadfastly to look. He then burned some incense and several bits of paper inscribed with charms; and, at the same time, called for various objects to appear in the ink. The boy declared that he saw all these objects, and, last of all, the image of the guilty person: he described

his stature, countenance, and dress; said that he knew him; and directly ran down into the garden, and apprehended one of the labourers, who, when brought before the master, immediately confessed that he was the thief.

The above relation made me desirous of witnessing a similar performance during my first visit to this country; but not being acquainted with the name of the magician here alluded to, or his place of abode, I was unable to obtain any tidings of him. I learned, however, soon after my return to England, that he had become known to later travellers in Egypt; was residing in Cairo; and that he was called the sheykh 'Abd-El-Kádir El-Maghrib'ee. A few weeks after my second arrival in Egypt, my neighbour 'Osman, interpreter of the British consulate, brought him to me; and I fixed a day for his visiting me, to give me a proof of the skill for which he is so much famed. He came at the time appointed, about two hours before noon; but seemed uneasy; frequently looked up at the sky, through the window; and remarked that the weather was unpropitious; it was dull and cloudy, and the wind was boisterous. The experiment was performed with three boys; one after another. With the first, it was partly successful; but with the others, it completely failed. The magician said that he could do nothing more that day; and that he would come in the evening of a subsequent day. He kept his appointment; and admitted that the time was favourable. While waiting for my neighbour, before mentioned, to come and witness the performances, we took pipes and coffee; and the magician chatted with me on indifferent subjects. He is a fine, tall, and stout man, of a rather fair complexion, with a dark brown beard; is shabbily dressed; and generally wears a large green turban, being a descendant of the prophet. In his conversation, he is affable and unaffected. He professed

to me that his wonders were effected by the agency of *good* spirits; but to others, he has said the reverse—that his magic is Satanic.

In preparing for the experiment of the magic mirror of ink, which, like some other performances of a similar nature, is here termed *darb el-mendel*, the magician first asked me for a reed-pen and ink, a piece of paper, and a pair of scissors; and, having cut off a narrow strip of paper, wrote upon it certain forms of invocation, together with another charm, by which he professes to accomplish the object of the experiment. He did not attempt to conceal these; and on my asking him to give me copies of them, he readily consented, and immediately wrote them for me; explaining to me, at the same time, that the object he had in view was accomplished through the influence of the two first words, “*Tarshun*” and “*Taryooshun*,” which, he said, were the names of two genii, his “familiar spirits.” I compared the copies with the originals; and found that they exactly agreed.

“*Tarshun ! Taryooshun ! Come down !*
Come down ! Be present ! Whither are gone
the prince and his troops ? Where are El-Ahmar
the prince and his troops ? Be present,
ye servants of these names !”

“And this is the removal. ‘And we have removed from
 thee
 thy veil ; and thy sight to-day
 is piercing.’ Correct: correct.”

Having written these, the magician cut off the paper containing the forms of invocation from that upon which the other charm was written; and cut the former into six strips. He then explained to me that the object of the latter charm (which contains part of the 21st verse of the *Soorat Kaf*,

or 50th chapter of the Kur-an) was to open the boy's eyes in a supernatural manner; to make his sight pierce into what is to us the invisible world.

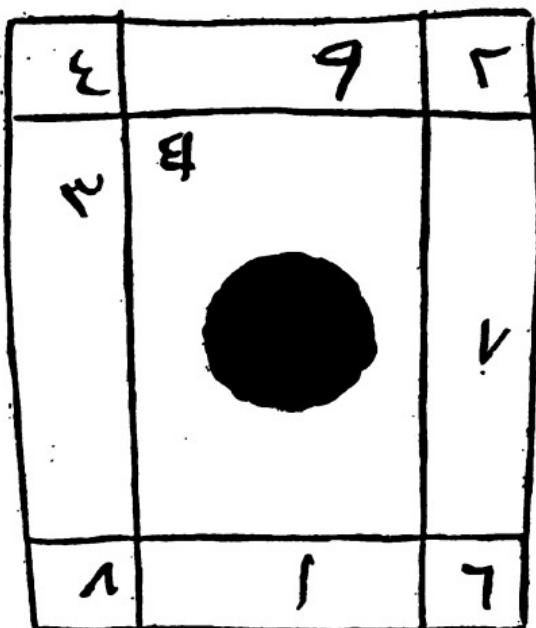
I had prepared, by the magician's direction, some frankincense and coriander-seed,* and a chafing-dish with some live charcoal in it. These were now brought into the room, together with the boy who was to be employed: he had been called in, by my desire, from among some boys in the street, returning from a manufactory; and was about eight or nine years of age. In reply to my inquiry respecting the description of persons who could see in the magic mirror of ink, the magician said that they were a boy not arrived at puberty, a virgin, a black female slave, and a pregnant woman. The chafing-dish was placed before him and the boy; and the latter was placed on a seat. The magician now desired my servant to put some frankincense and coriander-seed into the chafing-dish; then, taking hold of the boy's right hand, he drew, in the palm of it, a magic square, of which a copy is here given. The figures which it contains are Arabic numerals.† In the centre, he poured a little ink, and desired the boy to look into it, and tell him if he could see his face reflected in it; the boy replied that he saw his face clearly.

* He generally requires some benzoin to be added to these.

† The numbers in this magic square, in our own ordinary characters, are as follows:—

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

It will seen that the horizontal, vertical, and diagonal rows give each, the same sum, namely, 15.



Magic Diagram and Mirror of Ink.

The magician, holding the boy's hand all the while,* told him to continue looking intently into the ink; and not to raise his head.

He then took one of the little strips of paper inscribed with the forms of invocation, and dropped it into the chafing-dish, upon the burning coals and perfumes, which had already filled the room with their smoke; and as he did this, he commenced an indistinct muttering of words, which he continued during the whole process, excepting when he had to ask the boy a question; or to tell him what he was to say. The piece of paper containing the words from the Kur-án, he placed inside the fore part of the boy's takeeyeh, or skull-cap. He then asked him if he saw anything in the ink; and

* This reminds us of animal magnetism.

was answered “*Nū:*” but about a minute after, the boy, trembling, and seeming much frightened, said, “ I see a man sweeping the ground.” “ When he has done sweeping,” said the magician, “ tell me.” Presently the boy said, “ He has done.” The magician then again interrupted his muttering to ask the boy if he knew what a *beyrak* (or flag) was; and being answered “ Yes,” desired him to say, “ Bring a flag.” The boy did so; and soon said, “ He has brought a flag.” “ What colour is it?” asked the magician: the boy replied “ Red.” He was told to call for another flag; which he did; and soon after he said that he saw another brought; and that it was black. In like manner, he was told to call for a third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh; which he described as being successively brought before him; specifying their colours, as white, green, black, red, and blue. The magician then asked him (as he did, also, each time that a new flag was described as being brought), “ How many flags have you now before you?” “ Seven,” answered the boy. While this was going on, the magician put the second and third of the small strips of paper upon which the forms of invocation were written, into the chafing-dish; and, fresh frankincense and coriander-seed having been repeatedly added, the fumes became painful to the eyes. When the boy had described the seven flags as appearing to him, he was desired to say, “ Bring the Sultán’s tent; and pitch it.” This he did; and in about a minute after, he said, “ Some men have brought the tent; a large green tent: they are pitching it;” and presently he added, “ they have set it up.” “ Now,” said the magician, “ order the soldiers to come, and to pitch their camp around the tent of the Sultán.” The boy did as he was desired; and immediately said, “ I see a great many soldiers, with their tents: they have pitched their tents.” He was then told to order that the soldiers

should be drawn up in ranks; and, having done so, he presently said, that he saw them thus arranged. The magician had put the fourth of the little strips of paper into the chafing-dish; and soon after, he did the same with the fifth. He now said, "Tell some of the people to bring a bull." The boy gave the order required, and said, "I see a bull: it is red: four men are dragging it along; and three are beating it." He was told to desire them to kill it, and cut it up, and to put the meat in saucepans, and cook it. He did as he was directed; and described these operations as apparently performed before his eyes. "Tell the soldiers," said the magician, "to eat it." The boy did so; and said, "They are eating it. They have done; and are washing their hands." The magician then told him to call for the Sultán; and the boy, having done this, said, "I see the Sultán riding to his tent, on a bay horse; and he has on his head a high red cap: he has alighted at his tent, and sat down within it." "Desire them to bring coffee to the Sultán," said the magician, "and to form the court." These orders were given by the boy; and he said that he saw them performed. The magician had put the last of the six little strips of paper into the chafing-dish. In his mutterings I distinguished nothing but the words of the written invocation, frequently repeated, excepting on two or three occasions, when I heard him say, "If they demand information, inform them; and be ye veracious." But much that he repeated was inaudible, and as I did not ask him to teach me his art, I do not pretend to assert that I am fully acquainted with his invocations.

He now addressed himself to me; and asked me if I wished the boy to see any person who was absent or dead. I named Lord Nelson; of whom the boy had evidently never heard; for it was with much difficulty that he pronounced the name, after several trials. The magician desired the boy

to say to the Sultán—"My master salutes thee, and desires thee to bring Lord Nelson; bring him before my eyes, that I may see him, speedily." The boy then said so; and almost immediately added, "A messenger is gone, and has returned, and brought a man, dressed in a black* suit of European clothes: the man has lost his left arm." He then paused for a moment or two; and, looking more intently, and more closely into the ink, said, "No, he has not lost his left arm; but it is placed to his breast." This correction made his description more striking than it had been without it: since Lord Nelson generally had his empty sleeve attached to the breast of his coat: but it was the *right* arm that he had lost. Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered, that they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless.†

The next person I called for was a native of Egypt, who has been for many years resident in England, where he has adopted our dress; and who had been long confined to his bed by illness before I embarked for this country: I thought that his name, one not very uncommon in Egypt, might

* Dark blue is called, by the modern Egyptians, *eswed*, which properly signifies black, and is therefore so translated here.

† Whenever I desired the boy to call for any person to appear, I paid particular attention both to the magician and to 'Osmán. The latter gave no direction either by word or sign; and indeed he was generally unacquainted with the personal appearance of the individual called for. I took care that he had no previous communication with the boys; and have seen the experiment fail when he *could* have given directions to them, or to the magician. In short, it would be difficult to conceive any precaution which I did not take. It is important to add, that the dialect of the magician was more intelligible to me than to the boy. When I understood him perfectly at once, he was sometimes obliged to vary his words to make the boy comprehend what he said.

make the boy describe him incorrectly; though another boy, on the former visit of the magician, had described this same person as wearing a European dress, like that in which I last saw him. In the present case the boy said, "Here is a man brought on a kind of bier, and wrapped up in a sheet." This description would suit, supposing the person in question to be still confined to his bed, or if he be dead.* The boy described his face as covered; and was told to order that it should be uncovered. This he did; and then said, "His face is pale; and he has mustaches, but no beard;" which is correct.

Several other persons were successively called for; but the boy's descriptions of them were imperfect; though not altogether incorrect. He represented each object as appearing less distinct than the preceding one; as if his sight were gradually becoming dim: he was a minute, or more, before he could give any account of the persons he professed to see towards the close of the performance; and the magician said it was useless to proceed with him. Another boy was then brought in; and the magic square, &c. made in his hand; but he could see nothing. The magician said he was too old.

Though completely puzzled, I was somewhat disappointed with his performances, for they fell short of what he had accomplished, in many instances, in presence of certain of my friends and countrymen. On one of these occasions, an Englishman present ridiculed the performance, and said that nothing would satisfy him but a correct description of the appearance of his own father, of whom, he was sure, no one of the company had any knowledge. The boy, accord-

* A few months after this was written, I had the pleasure of hearing that the person here alluded to was in better health. Whether he was confined to his bed at the time when this experiment was performed, I have not been able to ascertain.

ingly, having called by name for the person alluded to, described a man in a Frank dress, with his hand placed to his head, wearing spectacles, and with one foot on the ground, and the other raised behind him, as if he were stepping down from a seat. The description was exactly true in every respect: the peculiar position of the hand was occasioned by an almost constant head-ache: and that of the foot or leg, by a stiff knee, caused by a fall from a horse, in hunting. I am assured that, on this occasion, the boy accurately described each person and thing that was called for. On another occasion, Shakspere was described with the most minute correctness, both as to person and dress; and I might add several other cases in which the same magician has excited astonishment in the sober minds of Englishmen of my acquaintance. A short time since, after performing in the usual manner, by means of a boy, he prepared the magic mirror in the hand of a young English lady, who, on looking into it for a little while, said that she saw a broom sweeping the ground without anybody holding it, and was so much frightened that she would look no longer.

I have stated these facts partly from my own experience, and partly as they came to my knowledge on the authority of respectable persons. The reader may be tempted to think that, in each instance, the boy saw images produced by some reflection in the ink; but this was evidently not the case; or that he was a confederate, or guided by leading questions. That there was no collusion, I satisfactorily ascertained, by selecting the boy who performed the part above described in my presence from a number of others passing by in the street, and by his rejecting a present which I afterwards offered him with the view of inducing him to confess that he did not *really see* what he had professed to have seen. I tried the veracity of another boy on a subsequent occasion in the same

manner; and the result was the same. The experiment often entirely fails; but when the boy employed is right in one case, he generally is so in all: when he gives, at first, an account altogether wrong, the magician usually dismisses him at once, saying that he is too old. The perfumes, or excited imagination, or fear, may be supposed to affect the vision of the boy who describes objects as appearing to him in the ink; but, if so, why does he see exactly what is required, and objects of which he can have had no previous particular notion? Neither I nor others have been able to discover any clue by which to penetrate the mystery; and if the reader be alike unable to give the solution, I hope that he will not allow the above account to induce in his mind any degree of scepticism with respect to other portions of this work.”*

* It has been suggested (in the ‘Quarterly Review,’ No. 117) that the performances were effected by means of pictures and a concave mirror; and that the images of the former were reflected from the surface of the mirror, and received on a cloud of smoke under the eyes of the boy. This, however, I cannot admit; because such means could not have been employed without my perceiving them; nor would the images be reversed (unless the pictures were so) by being reflected from the surface of a mirror, and received upon a *second surface*; for the boy was looking *down* upon the palm of his hand, so that an image could not be formed upon the smoke (which was copious, but not dense) between his eye and the supposed mirror.

APPENDIX B.

[From Mr. Lane's 'Modern Egyptians.']}

FEMALE ORNAMENTS.

THE ornaments of the women of Egypt are so various, that a description of them all would far exceed the limits which the nature of this work allows, and would require a great number of engravings, or be useless. I shall, however, describe all the principal kinds; and these will convey some idea of the rest. If the subject be not interesting to general readers, it may at least be of some use to artists, who are often left almost entirely to their own imagination in representing Arabian costumes and ornaments. I first describe those which are worn by *ladies*, and females of the *middle orders*.

The head-dress has already been mentioned, as composed of a "tarboosh" and "faroodeeyeh" (or kerchief), which latter, when wound round the former, is called "rabtah." The front part of the rabtah is often ornamented with spangles of gilt or plain silver, disposed in fanciful patterns; and in this case, the rabtah itself is generally of black or rose-coloured muslin or crape, and always plain. The more common kinds of rabtah have been described.

The "mizágee" is an ornament very generally worn. It is composed of a strip of muslin, most commonly black or rose-coloured, folded together several times, so as to form a

narrow band, about the breadth of a finger, or less. Its length is about five feet. The central part, for the space of about twelve or thirteen inches, is ornamented with spangles, which are placed close together, or in the form of diamonds, &c., or of bosses; and at each end, for about the same length, are a few other spangles, with an edging, and small tassels, of various coloured silks. Sometimes there is also a similar edging, with spangles suspended to it, along the lower edge of the ornamented part in the middle. The mizágee is bound round the head; the ornamented central part being over the forehead, generally above the edge of the rabtah: it is tied behind, at the upper part of the rabtah; and the ornamented ends, drawn forward, hang over the bosom.

The "kurs" is a round, convex ornament, commonly about five inches in diameter; which is very generally worn by ladies. It is sowed upon the crown of the tarboosh. There are two kinds. The first that I shall describe (the



Diamond Kurs.

only kind that is worn by ladies, or by the wives of tradesmen of moderate property) is the "kurs almás," or diamond kurs. This is composed of diamonds; set generally in gold; and is of open work, representing roses, leaves, &c. The diamonds are commonly of a very poor and shallow kind; and the gold of this and all other diamond ornaments worn in Egypt is much alloyed with copper. The value of a moderately handsome diamond kurs is about a hundred and twenty-five or a hundred and fifty pounds sterling. It is very seldom made of silver; and I think that those of gold, when attached to the deep-red tarboosh, have a richer effect, though not in accordance with our general taste. The wives even of petty tradesmen sometimes wear the diamond kurs: they are extremely fond of diamonds, and generally endeavour to get some, however bad. The kurs, being of considerable weight, is at first painful to wear; and women who are in the habit of wearing it complain of headache when they take it off; hence they retain it day and night; but some have an inferior one for the bed. Some ladies have one for ordinary wearing; another for particular occa-



Gold Kurs.

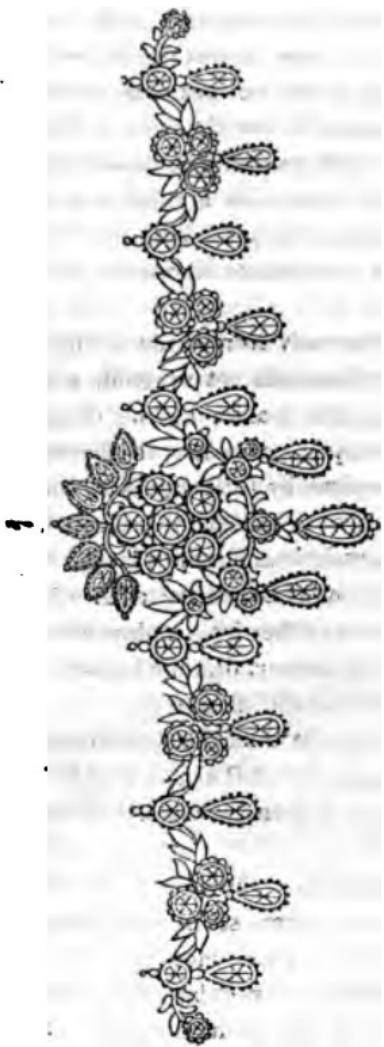
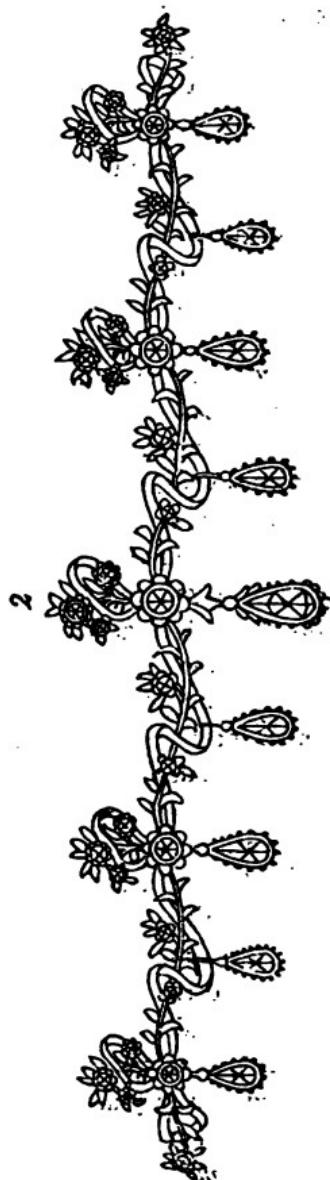
sions, a little larger and handsomer; and a third merely to wear in bed.—The other kind of *kurs*, “*kurs dahab*” (or, of gold), is a convex plate of very thin embossed gold, usually of the form represented above; and almost always with a false emerald (a piece of green glass), not cut with facets, set in the centre. Neither the emerald nor the ruby is here cut with facets: if so cut, they would generally be considered false. The simple gold *kurs* is lined with a thick coat of wax, which is covered with a piece of paper. It is worn by many women who cannot afford to purchase diamonds; and even by some servants.

The *kussah* is an ornament generally from seven to eight inches in length, composed of diamonds set in gold, and sometimes with emeralds, rubies, and pearls; having drops of diamonds or emeralds, &c., suspended to it. It is worn on the front of the *rabitah*, attached by little hooks at the back. I have seen several *kussahs* of diamonds, &c., set in silver instead of gold. The *kussah* is generally placed on the head of a bride, outside her shawl covering; as also is the *kurs*; and these ornaments are likewise employed to decorate the bier of a female. The former, like the latter, is worn by females of the higher and middle classes.

“*Enebeh*” is another name for the same kind of ornament, worn in the same manner. If of full size, it is fourteen or fifteen inches in length; and rather more than half encircles the head-dress.

The “*shawáteh*” (in the singular, “*sháteh*”) are two ornaments, each consisting of three or more strings of pearls, about the length of the *kussah*, with a pierced emerald uniting them in the centre, like the usual pearl necklace hereafter described; or they are composed of pearls arranged in the manner of a narrow lace, and often with the addition of a few small emeralds. They are attached to the *rabitah* in the

1. Kussah; 2. 'Enebeh; the former half, and the latter one-third, of the real size.



form of two festoons, one on each side of the head, from the extremity of the kussah to the back part of the head-dress, or, sometimes, to the ear-ring.

Instead of the kussah and shawáteh, and sometimes in addition to them, are worn some other ornaments which I proceed to describe.

The "reesheh" (literally, "feather") is a sprig of diamonds set in gold or silver. It is worn on the front or side of the head-dress.

The "hilál" is a crescent of diamonds set in gold or silver, and worn like the reesheh. In form it resembles the phasis of the moon when between two and three nights old ; its width being small, and its outward edge not more than half a circle.

The "kamarah" (or moon) is an ornament formed of a thin plate of gold, embossed with fanciful work, and sometimes with Arabic words, and having about seven little flat pieces of gold, called "bark," attached to the lower part; or it is composed of gold with diamonds, rubies, &c. Two specimens of the former kind are represented in the following page. One of these consists of three kamarahs connected together, to be worn on the front of the head-dress : the central contains the words "Yá Káfee Yá Sháfee" (O Sufficient ! O Restorer to health !) : that on the left, "Yá Háfiz" (O Preserver !) : that on the right, "Yá Eméen" (O Trust-worthy !) : these, therefore, are charms as well as ornaments.

The "sákiyeh" (or water-wheel), so called from its form, is a circular flat ornament of gold filigree-work, with small pearls, and with a diamond or other precious stone in the centre, and bark and emeralds suspended from the lower part. It is worn in the same manner as the kamarah, or with the latter ornament.

The "'ood es-saleeb" (or wood of the cross) is a kind of



3



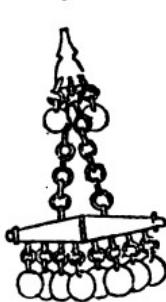
4



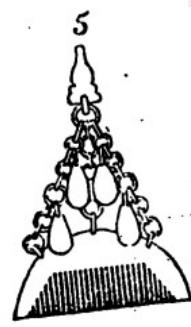
2



3



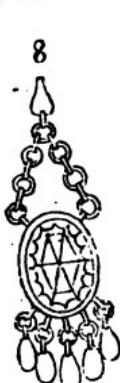
4



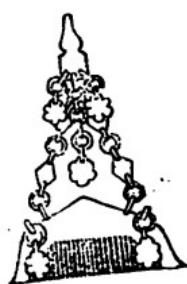
5



7



8



6

1 and 2. Kamarahs. 3. Sákiyeh. 4. 'Ood es-Saleeb. 5 and 6. Misals.
7. 'Akeek. 8. Belloor. Each half the real size.

ornament undoubtedly borrowed from the Christians; and it is surprising that Mohammanan women should wear it, and give it this appellation. It is a little round and slender piece of wood, rather smaller towards the extremities than in the middle, enclosed in a case of gold, of the same form, composed of two pieces which unite in the middle, having two chains and a hook by which to suspend it, and a row of bark along the bottom. It is worn in the place of, or with, the two ornaments just before described.

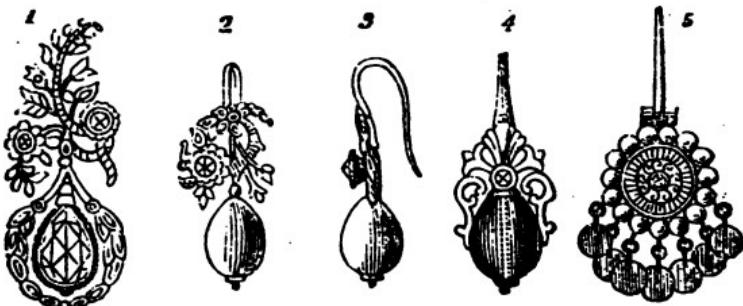
The "misht" (or comb) is a little comb of gold, worn in the same manner as the three kinds of ornament described next before this, and generally with one or more of those ornaments. It is suspended by small chains and a hook, having four or five bark attached.

There is also an ornament somewhat similar to those just mentioned, composed of a cornelian, or a piece of crystal or of colourless glass, set in gold, suspended by two chains and a hook, and having bark attached to the bottom. The former kind is called "akeek" (which signifies "cornelian"), and the latter, "belloor" ("crystal").

Several ornaments in the shapes of flowers, butterflies, &c. are also worn upon the head-dress; but seldom alone.

Of ear-rings ("halak") there is a great variety. Some of the more usual kinds are here represented. The first is of a diamond set in silver. It consists of a drop suspended within a wreath hanging from a sprig. The back of the silver is gilt, to prevent its being tarnished by perspiration. The specimen here given is that for the right ear: its fellow is similar; but with the sprig reversed. This pair of ear-rings is suited for a lady of wealth.—So also is the second, which resembles the former, excepting that it has a large pearl in the place of the diamond drop and wreath, and that the diamonds of the sprig are set in gold. No. 3 is a side view

of the same.—The next consists of gold, and an emerald pierced through the middle, with a small diamond above the emerald. Emeralds are generally pierced in Egypt, and



Ear-rings—each half the real size.

spoiled by this process as much as by not being cut with facets.—The last is of gold, with a small ruby in the centre. The ruby is set in fine filigree-work, which is surrounded by fifteen balls of gold. To the seven lower balls are suspended as many circular bark.

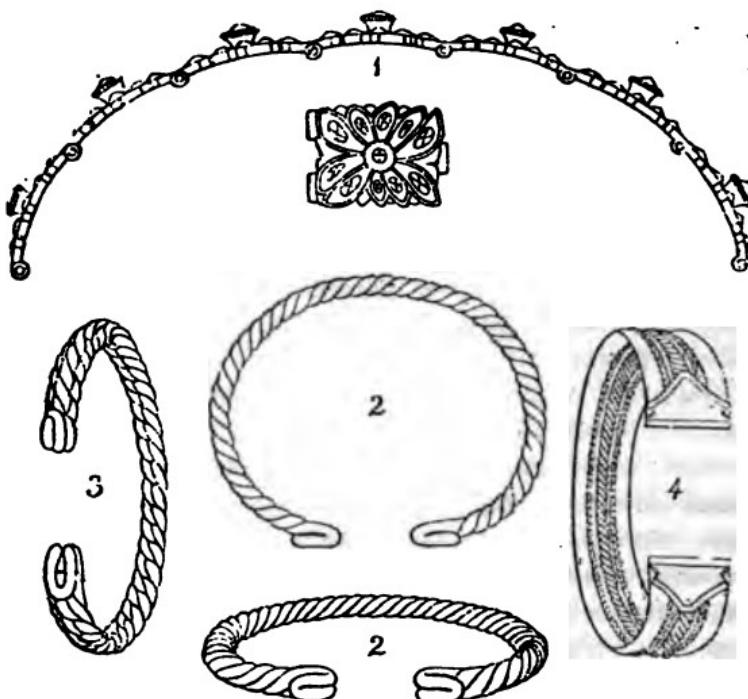
The necklace ("'ekd") is another description of ornament of which the Egyptians have a great variety; but almost all of them are similar in the following particulars. 1st. The beads, &c., of which they are composed are, altogether, not more than ten inches in length; so that they would not entirely encircle the neck if tied quite tight, which is never done; the string extends about six or seven inches beyond each extremity of the series of beads; and when the necklace is tied in the usual manner, there is generally a space of three inches or more between these extremities; but the plaits of hair conceal these parts of the string. 2ndly. There is generally, in the centre, one bead or other ornament (and sometimes there are three, or five, or seven) differing in size, form, material, or colour from the others.—The necklaces mostly worn by ladies are of diamonds or

pearls. There is also a long kind of necklace, reaching to the girdle, and composed of diamonds or other precious stones, which is called "kiládeh." Some women form a long necklace of this kind with Venetian sequins, or Turkish or Egyptian gold coins.

The finger-rings ("khátims") differ so little from those common among ourselves, excepting in the clumsiness of their workmanship, and the badness of the jewels, that I need not describe them. A finger-ring without a stone is called "debleh," or "dibleh."

Bracelets ("asáwir") are of diamonds or other precious stones set in gold, or of pearls, or of gold alone. The more common kinds are represented in an engraving here inserted.—No. 1 is a side view of a diamond bracelet, with a front view of a portion of the same.—No. 2 is the most fashionable kind of gold bracelet, which is formed of a simple twist.—No. 3 is a very common, but less fashionable kind of bracelet of twisted gold. No. 4 is also of gold.—These bracelets of gold are pulled open a little to be put on the wrist. They are generally made of fine Venetian gold, which is very flexible.

The ornaments of the hair I shall next describe.—It has been mentioned, that all the hair of the head, excepting a little over the forehead and temples, is arranged in plaits, or braids, which hang down the back. These plaits are generally from eleven to twenty-five in number; but always of an uneven number: eleven is considered a scanty number: thirteen and fifteen are more common. Three times the number of black silk strings (three to each plait of hair, and each united at the top), from sixteen to eighteen inches in length, are braided with the hair for about a quarter of their length; or they are attached to a lace or band of black silk which is bound round the head, and in this case hang



Bracelets—each half the real size.

entirely separate from the plaits of hair, which they almost conceal. These strings are called "keytâns;" and together with certain ornaments of gold, &c., the more common of which are here represented, compose what is termed the



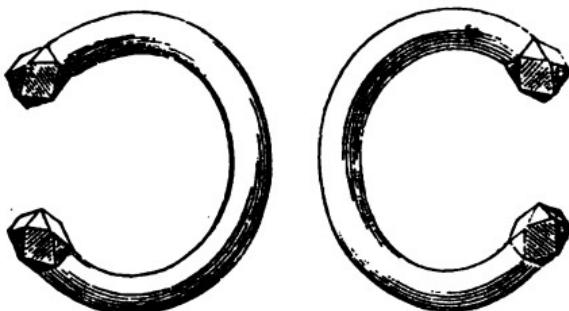
1, 2, 3, 4. Bark. 5. Másoorah. 6. Habbeh. 7. Shiftish'eh.
Each half the real size.

"safa." Along each string, excepting from the upper extremity to about a quarter or (at most) a third of its length, are generally attached nine or more of the little flat

ornaments of gold called "bark." These are commonly all of the same form, and about an inch, or a little more, apart; but those of each string are purposely placed so as not exactly to correspond with those of the others. The most usual forms of bark are Nos. 1 and 2 of the specimens given above. At the end of each string is a small gold tube, called "másoorah," about three-eighths of an inch long, or a kind of gold bead in the form of a cube with a portion cut off from each angle, called "habbeh." Beneath the másoorah or habbeh is a little ring, to which is most commonly suspended a Turkish gold coin called "Ruba Fenduklee," equivalent to nearly 1s. 8d. of our money, and a little more than half an inch in diameter. Such is the most general description of safá; but there are more genteel kinds, in which the habbeh is usually preferred to the másoorah, and instead of the Ruba Fenduklee is a flat ornament of gold, called, from its form, "kummetrë," or "pear." There are also other and more approved substitutes for the gold coin; the most usual of which is called "shiftish'eh," composed of open gold work, with a pearl in the centre. Some ladies substitute a little tassel of pearls for the gold coin; or suspend alternately pearls and emeralds to the bottom of the triple strings; and attach a pearl with each of the bark. The safá thus composed with pearls is called "safa loolee." Coral beads are also sometimes attached in the same manner as the pearls.—From what has been said above, it appears that a moderate safá of thirteen plaits will consist of 39 strings, 351 bark, 39 másoorahs or habbehs, and 39 gold coins or other ornaments; and that a safá of twenty-five plaits, with twelve bark to each string, will contain no fewer than 900 bark, and 75 of each of the other appendages. The safá appears to me the prettiest, as well as the most singular, of all the ornaments worn by the ladies of Egypt.

The glittering of the bark, &c., and their chinking together as the wearer walks, have a peculiarly lively effect.

Anklets ("khulkhál"), of solid gold or silver, and of the form here sketched, are worn by some ladies; but are more



Anklets—one-fourth of the real size.

uncommon than they formerly were. They are of course very heavy, and, knocking together as the wearer walks, make a ringing noise; hence it is said in a song, "The ringing of thine anklets has deprived me of my reason." Isaiah alludes to this,* or perhaps to the sound produced by another kind of anklet which will be mentioned hereafter.

The only description of ladies' ornaments that I have yet to describe is the "hegáb," or amulet. This is a writing covered with wax cloth, to preserve it from accidental pollution, or injury by moisture, and enclosed in a case of thin embossed gold or silver, which is attached to a silk string, or a chain, and generally hung on the right side, above the girdle; the string or chain being passed over the left shoulder. Sometimes these cases bear Arabic inscriptions; such as "Má-sháa-lláh" ("What God willeth [cometh to pass]") and "Yá kadi-l-hágát" ("O decreer of the things that are needful!"). I insert an engraving of three hegábs of gold,

* Chap. iii. ver. 16.

attached to a string, to be worn together. The central one is a thin, flat case, containing a folded paper : it is about a



Hegâb—one-fourth of the real size.

third of an inch thick : the others are cylindrical cases, with hemispherical ends, and contain scrolls : each has a row of bark along the bottom. Hegâbs such as these, or of a triangular form, are worn by many children, as well as women ; and those of the latter form are often attached to a child's head-dress.

The ornaments worn by females of the *lower orders* must now be described.

It is necessary, perhaps, to remind the reader, that the head-dress of these women, with the exception of some of the poor in the villages, generally consists of an 'asbeh; and that some wear, instead of this, the tarboosh and faroodeeyeh. Sometimes a string of Venetian sequins (which is called "sheddeh benâd'kah") is worn along the front of the 'asbeh or rabtah. The tarboosh is also sometimes decorated with the gold kurs and the faroodeeyeh, with some other ornaments before described, as the gold kamarahs, sakiyeh, misht, &c.

The "halak," or ear-rings, are of a great variety of forms

Some are of gold and precious stones ; but the more common of brass ; and many of the latter have coloured beads attached to them. A few are of silver.

The "khizám," or nose-ring, commonly called "khuzám," is worn by a few of the women of the lower orders in Cairo, and by many of those in the country towns and villages both of Upper and Lower Egypt. It is most commonly made of brass ; is from an inch to an inch and a half in diameter ; and has usually three or more coloured glass beads, generally red and blue, attached to it. It is almost always



Nose-rings—half the real size.

passed through the right ala of the nose ; and hangs partly before the mouth ; so that the wearer is obliged to hold it up with one hand when she puts anything into her mouth. It is sometimes of gold. This ornament is as ancient as the time of the patriarch Abraham ;* and is mentioned by Isaiah† and by Ezekiel.‡ To those who are unaccustomed to the sight of it, the nose-ring is certainly the reverse of an ornament.

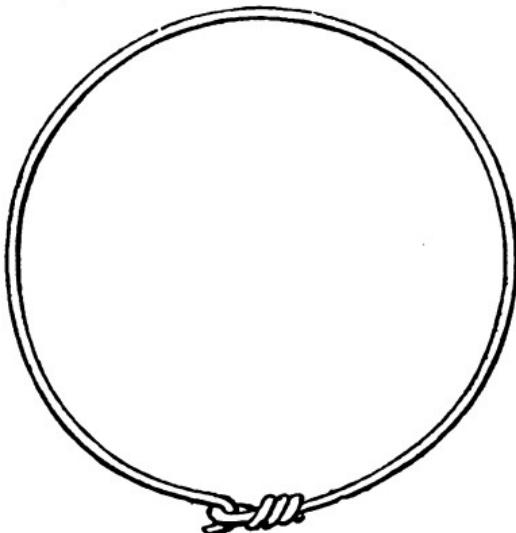
* See Genesis xxiv. 47, where in our common version, "car-ring" is improperly put for "nose-ring."

† Chap. iii. ver. 21.

‡ Chap. xvi. ver. 12. Here, again, a mistake is made in our common version, but corrected in the margin.

The “'ekd,” or necklace, is generally of a style similar to those which I have already described. I have before mentioned that the libbeh and sha’eer are worn by some women of the lower orders; but their necklaces are most commonly composed of coloured glass beads; sometimes, of a single string; and sometimes, of several strings, with one or more larger beads in the centre: or they are made in the form of net-work. The Egyptian women, being excessively fond of ornaments, often wear two or three necklaces of the value of a penny each, or less. Some necklaces are composed of large beads of transparent amber.

Another ornament worn by many of them on the neck is a ring, called “tok,” of silver or brass or pewter. Little girls, also, sometimes wear this ornament. Some of the smaller toks are made of iron.



Tok, or Neck-ring—one-fourth of the real size.

Finger-rings of silver or of brass are almost universally

worn. Brass rings, with pieces of coloured glass set in them, may be purchased in Cairo for scarcely more than a farthing each ; and many women wear two, three, or more, of these.

The "asáwir," or bracelets, are of various kinds. Some are of silver ; and some of brass or copper ; and of the same form as those of gold before described. Those of brass are the more common. There are also bracelets composed of large amber beads, and others of bone ; and there is a very common kind, called "ghuweyshát," of opaque, coloured glass, generally blue or green, but sometimes variegated with other colours. These, and the bone bracelets, are drawn over the hand.

Some of the women of the lower orders imitate their superiors in arranging their hair in several plaits, and plaiting, with each of these, the black silk strings which are worn by the ladies ; but it is the general practice of the women of these classes to divide their hair into only two tresses behind, and to plait, with each of these tresses, three red silk strings, each of which has a tassel at the end, and reaches more than half way towards the ground ; so that they are usually obliged to draw aside the tassel before they sit down. These appendages are called "'okoos."

"Khulkhál," or anklets of solid silver, already described, are worn by the wives of some of the richer peasants, and of the sheykhhs of villages ; and small khulkháls of iron are worn by many children. It was also a common custom among the Arabs, for girls or young women to wear a string of bells on their feet. I have seen many little girls in Cairo with small round bells attached to their anklets. Perhaps it is to the sound of ornaments of this kind, rather than that of the more common anklet, that Isaiah alludes in chapter ii. verse 16.

APPENDIX C.

[The description of the Hareem of the Pasha of Egypt naturally directs the attention of the reader to this remarkable man, who has for so many years presided over the destinies of that country. We hope that the following brief account of his career, with an abridgment of Mr. Lane's account of "The Government" of Egypt, may fitly conclude this volume.]

ACCOUNT OF MOHAMMAD 'ALEE, AND THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT.

Mohammad 'Alee, or Mehemet Ali, was born in 1769, at Kavalla, a town of Roumelia, on the northern shore of the Grecian Archipelago. His father, Ibrahim Aga, was head of the police of the district of Kavalla. Mohammad 'Alee having entered into business as a dealer in tobacco, was successful in trade, and increased his prosperity by an advantageous marriage. When the French invaded Egypt, and the Sultan found it necessary to collect troops in the various provinces of his empire, Mohammed 'Alee came to Egypt as second in command over three hundred men, which was the military contingent furnished by Kavalla; and he was present at the battle of Aboukir in 1799. He soon distin-

guished himself by his intrepidity, promptitude, and sagacity, and was promoted to a rank which placed under his command one thousand men. By degrees he became the favoured chief not only of the Albanian soldiers employed in Egypt, but of the chiefs of the Mamelukes; and when Kourschid Pasha was deposed, in 1805, in the rebellion of which Cairo became the centre, Mohammad 'Alee was elected governor of Egypt in his place. The Sultan, aware of his rising power and ambitious character, appointed him Pasha of Jidda, but he continued in Egypt, and the Sultan sent a fleet to compel him to leave the country. By the interference however of the Captain Pasha and the French consul, he managed to retain his government in Egypt, and to regain, at least ostensibly, the favour of the Sultan. But the Sultan was not long satisfied; in 1806 he made another attempt to remove Mohammad 'Alee from Egypt by appointing him Pasha of Salonica. In this appointment he pretended to acquiesce, but did not enter upon his new government, in consequence, as he alleged, of the importunities of his soldiers, who would not allow him to depart from Egypt. The influence of his friends again prevailed, aided by the payment of a large sum of money, and he was again received into the Sultan's favour.

The Mamelukes, or Memlooks, were a military body who had been in effect the rulers of Egypt for more than four hundred years. They were instituted in the early part of the thirteenth century by Malek Salech, who purchased many thousands of slaves, with whom the markets of Asia were then abundantly supplied in consequence of the devastating wars of Ghengis Khan. He chose chiefly young men, natives of the Caucasian regions, whom he trained in military exercises, and embodied into a corps of 12,000 men. This corps, by its discipline and organization, soon became formidable to its masters, and its leaders became

the rulers of Egypt till 1517, when the Sultan Selim I. marched into the country, defeated the Mamelukes near Heliopolis, took Cairo, and put to death Tomaun Bey, the last of the Circassian dynasty, which had ruled Egypt from 1382 till that time. Selim, however, was obliged to maintain the Mamelukes as a military aristocracy in Egypt. The Beys of the Mamelukes, of whom there were twenty-four, though subject to the Pasha of Egypt, continued to be the governors of twenty-four districts. The Beys were elected out of the body of Mamelukes, who, from their military superiority, maintained a power almost independent of the Sultan and the Pasha. On the 21st of July, 1798, when the French army approached the great Pyramids, they saw the whole Mameluke force prepared for action under Mourad and Ibrahim Beys. The Mamelukes formed a splendid cavalry of about 5000 men, besides Arab auxiliaries; but their infantry, composed chiefly of fellahs, was contemptible. The Mamelukes had no idea of the resistance of which squares of disciplined infantry are capable. They charged furiously, and for a moment disordered one of the French squares, but succeeded no further, having no guns to support them. The volleys of musketry and grape-shot made fearful havoc among them; and after losing most of their men in desperate attempts to break the French ranks, the remains of this brilliant cavalry retreated towards Upper Egypt, except a few who crossed the Nile and marched towards Syria.

After the English and the Turks had reconquered Egypt in 1801, the Mamelukes regained a good deal of their former power, though the Sultan was at first disinclined to favour them. By degrees, however, as he began to fear the ambition of Mohammad 'Alee, who continued to extend and consolidate his power, he was disposed to restore them to their old authority as a countercheck to the influence of the

Pasha. In 1811 Mohammed 'Alee felt himself sufficiently safe to put in execution a project which he had formed for destroying the power of the Mamelukes at a blow. His plan was treacherous and ferocious, but it was completely successful. The ceremony of investing his second son Toosoon with the caftan, when about to proceed at the head of an expedition against the Wahabees of Mecca, was the occasion which he chose for the execution of his purpose. The investiture was to take place in the citadel of Cairo, where he pretended to have prepared a banquet, to which the principal Mamelukes were invited, and between 400 and 500 of them came. Count Forbin, in his '*Voyage dans le Levant*,' gives the following description of the scene:—

"That audacious militia, the Mamelukes, which, since the time of Malek Shah, had made Egypt to feel their power, were nearly destroyed by Mohammed Ali. They had received orders to hold themselves in readiness to take part in a grand ceremony, which was to precede the departure of his son for Mecca. 'That day,' said an inhabitant of Cairo to me, 'the sun rose the colour of blood!' The Pasha looked dark and melancholy: but recollecting that he was to preside at one of the most brilliant fêtes of the Mussulmans, he assumed a smile which contrasted remarkably with his general appearance. He had addressed the Mamelukes as the 'Elder Sons of the Prophet;' and called upon them, by the peace which subsisted between them, to celebrate with him the departure of his son for the Holy Tomb.

"In the meantime a number of faithful Albanians were concealed upon the ramparts, the towers, and behind the walls of the citadel. The Mamelukes arrived with the utmost confidence, and the gates were closed upon them. The Pasha had placed himself on the summit of a terrace, seated on a carpet, smoking a magnificent narguile (Persian

pipe), from whence he could see every motion without being seen ; behind him were three of his confidential officers. He regarded the scene below with a fixed and terrible look, without speaking a word ; the signal was given to fire, and the massacre of the Mamelukes commenced. They were adorned, or rather encumbered, with their finest arms, and mounted on noble horses ; but their numbers, their courage —all were useless—they were destroyed!"

Such of the Mamelukes as escaped the indiscriminate massacre within the walls of the castle, were seized and beheaded ; and numbers in the towns and villages, on the calamity which had befallen their brethren being made known, shared a like fate. The remnant retired to Dongola in Nubia ; but they were scattered by Ibrahim Pasha, and from that period the total destruction, or, at least, the complete subjugation, of the once proud Mamelukes may be dated.

The Wahabees were a Mohammedan sect in Arabia, who derived their name from Abdu-l-Wahab, a reformer of the religion of Mohammed, who was born about the end of the seventeenth century. This religious sect gradually attained to such a degree of temporal and political power that the very existence of the Turkish empire was endangered by them. They conquered Mecca in 1803 and Medina in 1804. Pilgrimages were stopped. From 1803 to 1809 no great caravan ventured to cross Arabia. They overran Syria, and concluded an alliance with Yúsuf, the rebellious Pasha of Bagdad. At length Mohammad 'Alee, in 1809, began to make preparations against them. To save his army from marching round by the northern gulfs of the Red Sea, he ordered timber for a flotilla of twenty-eight vessels to be got ready at Boolak, the port of Cairo, whence it was carried by camels to Suez, where the ships were constructed.

After the destruction of the Mamelukes, Mohammad 'Alee prosecuted the war against the Wahabees with vigour and perseverance. His son Toosoon Bey was the commander of the flotilla, which sailed down the Red Sea and entered Arabia in 1811; in 1812 he was defeated by the Wahabees near Medina, but he took that town in the course of the year. This conquest was mainly due to the impetuous courage of Thomas Keith, a Scotchman, known by the name and title of Ibrahim Aga, who took the outworks of Medina by storm. Mecca was taken in 1813. In 1814 Sa'ud, the chief of the Wahabees, died, and was succeeded by his eldest son Abdullah. The death of Sa'ud was the forerunner of the ruin of the Wahabees. The Egyptians continued to add to their conquests till 1815, when peace was concluded on terms unfavourable to Abdullah. Hostilities however suddenly broke out again, and another expedition was fitted out, under the command of Ibrahim Pasha, the eldest son of Mohammad 'Alee, who entered Arabia with his army in 1816. The Wahabees made an obstinate resistance, but in 1818 they were compelled to retreat to Der'aiyeh, where Abdullah was besieged by Ibrahim. The siege was long, but was carried on by Ibrahim with admirable skill and perseverance till December, 1818, when Abdullah surrendered. He and several of his family were sent to Constantinople, when after having been paraded through the streets for three days, they were beheaded. The greater part of the territories conquered from the Wahabees fell under the authority of Mohammad 'Alee. The power of the Wahabees, though broken, was not exterminated, and they gave him considerable trouble afterwards.

The navigation of the Nile from Rosetta to Alexandria has been attended for many years with considerable difficulty and danger, from the constant deposit brought down from

the countries of Sennaar, Dongola, &c., and left at its mouth, which has formed a bar, that, when the wind blows on shore, is peculiarly dangerous to heavy-laden vessels. To avoid this difficulty, Mohammad 'Alee in the year 1819, partly, it is said, at the suggestion of Mr. Briggs, and partly from having lost a valuable cargo himself at Rosetta, came to the determination of cutting a canal from Mahmoodeyeh, a part of the environs of Alexandria, to a village called Atfieh, on the banks of the Nile, a distance of about forty miles. For this purpose he appointed Ismaël Pasha director of the works, with various subordinate officers, at the same time issuing orders to the various sheikhs of the provinces of Sakarah, Shizeh, Mensourah, Sharkieh, Menouf, Bahyreh, and some others, to supply each a quota of fellahs (amounting in all to 300,000 men, women, and children), and to encamp them along the site of the intended canal. The Pasha, however, had totally neglected to furnish either a sufficient supply of provisions for this immense multitude, or the requisite implements for excavation; the consequences were, that as he had appointed several regiments of the Nizam (or modern troops) at various stations along the line to prevent any relaxation, they were compelled to scrape the mud and sand up with their hands, which was conveyed by the women and children in baskets, and thrown on either hand. Having frequently to dig below the level of the sea, and being totally destitute of pumps to keep the water in check, they were compelled to work up to their knees in mud, which brought on ague. This, combined with labour to which they were totally unaccustomed, an insufficiency of provisions (their daily food consisting of a little lentil broth, a small quantity of bread, and a few beans), ill-treatment, want of water and protection from the cold air at night, caused a great mortality among them, frequently as many as a hundred dying in a day. In

the hurry and confusion attending such a scene, as they fell they were buried among the earth thrown up from the remaining excavations. When this canal was finished, which was effected in seven months, 30,000 fellow-creatures were found to have been destroyed in this most barbarous expenditure of human power.

At the termination at Atfieh a sluice is erected to admit the Nile during its rise, and being closed on its retiring, the water is preserved for the purposes of navigation and irrigation. Alexandria is also supplied with water from this canal. The average breadth of this canal is about 220 feet, and the depth perhaps about 7½ feet, very serpentine at the commencement at Mahmoodeyeh, but gradually improving as you proceed. The navigation on this canal is a great source of revenue to the Pasha, as each kanjah pays a toll both going and returning, the original outlay having been very inconsiderable.

Besides the Mahmoodeyeh canal, many other canals have been made by direction of Mohammad 'Alee. The canal of Tanta, in the Delta, is about thirty miles long and about four yards wide; it has four sluices at Vames, and preserves its water throughout the year. The canal of Bouhyeh, on the Damietta branch of the Nile, is about thirty-five miles long and four yards wide. The canal of Bahyreh, on the Rosetta branch of the Nile, is nearly sixty miles long, and about five yards wide. Smaller canals have been excavated to a very considerable extent.

These canals, except that of Mahmoodeyeh, which is principally for navigation, are used chiefly for irrigation, the water being raised from them mostly by water-wheels, of which there are more than 50,000 in Lower Egypt, and of these about 38,000 have been introduced under the direction of Mohammad 'Alee. Each water-wheel is worked for the

most part by three oxen and two men, and they work, on an average, 180 days in the year. Wherever water can be thus applied, the productive powers of the soil seem to be almost incalculable.

The Greek war of independence began in 1820. In 1824 Mohammad 'Alee sent a powerful army and fleet to Greece, to assist the Sultan. Though the Greeks were unable to drive the Turks and Egyptians out of their country, they were determined not to submit; and the contest had already lasted seven years when the battle of Navarino may be said to have decided the independence of Greece. If that naval battle had not taken place, the waste of human life would probably have been continued for several years longer, and the war have been terminated only by the extermination and transportation of the Greek population, which had been carried into effect on a large scale in the Morea by Ibrahim Pasha.

The naval battle of Navarino took place on the 20th of October, 1827, between the French, English, and Russian combined fleet, on one side, and the Turco-Egyptian fleet, which was anchored in the Bay of Navarino, on the other side. The English had three ships of the line and four frigates, the French three ships of the line and two frigates, and the Russians four ships of the line and four frigates. The combined fleet of the Turks and Egyptians consisted of three ships of the line and twenty-five frigates, besides smaller vessels. Admiral Codrington had the command of the combined fleet, and his object was to oblige Ibrahim Pasha to evacuate the Morea. After some desultory negotiations and some evasions on the part of Ibrahim, the English admiral resolved to attack Ibrahim's fleet. The Turco-Egyptians were completely defeated, with the loss of their three ships of the line, four of their frigates, and about forty

or fifty smaller vessels. A convention followed, by which Ibrahim undertook to evacuate the Morea, and to restore the Greek prisoners whom he had sent to Egypt to their native country. The Egyptian ships which had not been destroyed were restored to the Pasha of Egypt. The Sultan, however, still continued to assert his right of domination over Greece, and the emancipation of Greece was not established till March, 1829, when the Conference of London laid down the principle of their independence, and the successful campaign during the same year of the Russians against the Turks induced the Sultan to acknowledge it by an article of the treaty of Adrianople, September, 1829.

Mohammad 'Alee now busied himself in the improvement of his country and of his public establishments. Though the means which he employed are little in accordance with our notions of the manner in which a government should treat its subjects, it must be admitted that he executed in a short time a number of extraordinary works. His military and naval conscriptions, however, induced many of the inhabitants of Egypt to abandon their country, and take refuge in Syria, where they received the protection of Abdallah, pasha of Acre. This afforded Mohammad 'Alee a pretext for commencing a war in Syria, which country he had obviously formed the design of annexing to Egypt, and then raising his pashalik into an independent kingdom.

Having raised an army of 40,000 men, including eight regiments of cavalry, a large park of artillery, and a battering-train, he appointed his son Ibrahim Pasha commander-in-chief. A squadron of five sail of the line and several frigates was fitted out at the same time. Ibrahim invaded Syria, and took Gaza in October, 1831. In November the squadron set sail for Acre, and on the 9th of December he commenced the siege of that fortress. Little skill was dis-

played in conducting the operations either by land or sea, and after six months Acre was taken by storm, May 21, 1832. Abdallah Pasha, who conducted the defence with chivalrous courage, was sent prisoner to Egypt, where he was treated with the honour due to his bravery, and had a palace assigned for his residence on the island of Rhouda.

Meantime, the Sultan, who had in vain issued his firman commanding Ibrahim to withdraw his troops from Syria, declared war against him April 15, 1832. On the 13th of June in that year Ibrahim took Damascus. On the 7th of July he defeated the army of the Sultan at Homs, on the 1st of August took Aleppo, and on the 21st of December totally defeated and dispersed the Ottoman army at Koniah, in Anatolia, and took the Grand Vizier prisoner.

If Ibrahim had pushed on immediately for Constantinople, Mohammad 'Alee might possibly have been placed on the throne of the Sultan, but he did not leave Koniah till the 20th of January, 1833, and reached Kutayah on the 1st of February. Meantime the Sultan had applied to his old enemy Russia for assistance against his rebellious subject. The assistance was granted, and a Russian squadron and army had reached the Bosphorus before Ibrahim had entered Kutayah. This determined Ibrahim to resort to negotiation, and by the treaty of Kutayah the Ottoman empire was saved from destruction. On the 6th of May, 1833, the Sultan, by a firman, confirmed Mohammad 'Alee in his government of Egypt, granting to him in addition that of Damascus, Tripoli, Said, Safed, Naplous, and Jerusalem, and on the 9th of May Ibrahim was ordered to repass the Taurus.

England and France now began to turn their attention to the transactions and the state of affairs in the East. An English agent and consul was permanently established at Alexandria, and other European powers followed the example.

Meantime Mohammad 'Alee continued to keep up his army and navy, sent officers to be instructed in ship-building in the English dock-yards, had a French officer of distinction to discipline his army, and a French Admiral at the head of his fleet. His government of Syria was exceedingly oppressive by heavy taxation and conscription, and insurrections began to break out in 1834, in the Haouran, and afterwards among the Druses and Naplousians. The Sultan, who had never ceased to form plans for the recovery of Syria from the power of Mohammad 'Alee, in 1834 began to raise troops in the eastern part of Asia Minor. Mohammad 'Alee at the same time was preparing to secure his independence. He fortified the passes of the Taurus, and built barracks at Antioch, St. Jean d'Acre, and other places. In 1838, Mohammad 'Alee announced to the consuls his intention before long to declare himself independent. But the Sultan had been preparing for him. After a series of indecisive movements, and many fruitless negotiations between both parties and the great European powers, the Sultan, in May, 1839, sent an army into Syria, which was supposed to amount to 80,000 men, with 170 guns. Ibrahim Pasha immediately assembled his army, which was said to consist of 55,000 infantry, 10,000 regular cavalry, 60,000 irregular cavalry, and 196 guns. The English and French governments, by their agents and by sending fleets to the coast of Syria, endeavoured to settle the differences between the contending parties, but in vain. On the 24th of June, 1839, Ibrahim Pasha attacked the Turkish army at Nezib, and so completely defeated it that the remains passed the frontier in complete disorder, leaving baggage, ammunition, and guns behind them. On the 4th of July the Turkish fleet deserted to Mohammad 'Alee. The Sultan Mahmoud died on the 30th June, and was succeeded by his son, Abdul Medjid, who was

then only sixteen years of age, to whom, on the 16th of July, Mohammad 'Alee signified his determination to assert by force his right to the hereditary government of all the provinces then under his command, instead of that of Egypt only, which was offered to him by the new Sultan. The five allied powers, England, France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, now interfered in a more peremptory manner, and negotiations ensued, which terminated in the withdrawal of France and the conclusion of a treaty between the remaining four powers and Turkey, to compel the submission of Mohammad 'Alee. The treaty was signed in London, July 15, 1840.

A fleet consisting of English, Austrian, and Turkish vessels immediately commenced operations to enforce the terms of the treaty. Beyrouth, Acre, and Sidon were successively stormed and taken, and after much negotiation Mohammad 'Alee consented to relinquish Syria altogether, and the hereditary government of Egypt was bestowed upon him by the Sultan, January 11, 1841. The important political events of the life of Mohammad 'Alee here terminate.

He has three sons now living. Ibrahim Pasha was born at Kavalla in 1789. He is middle-sized, and very stout. His features are large, heavy, and marked by the small pox. Toosoon Pasha, the second son, died of the plague in 1813. Ishmail Pasha, the third son, was murdered by the blacks at Sennaar. Said Bey, the fourth son, was born in 1822. The fifth son is called Mohammad 'Alee.

Mohammad 'Alee is now 75 years of age. His bodily vigour is said to be breaking down, as might be expected, but his mental energy remains unimpaired. He is of the middle stature, stout, and robust; his features somewhat coarse, but very expressive, with dark grey eyes. Mr. St. John, who visited Egypt in 1832, has very minutely described his habits, both private and public, as they were at

that time. His dress was that of an ordinary Turkish gentleman. He slept little, rose before daybreak, left his harem on horseback, and proceeded to his divan for the despatch of business, which usually occupied till about nine o'clock, at which hour consuls and other persons desiring a public audience generally arrived. In an hour or two they retired, and he repaired to his harem, where he remained till about three or half-past three in the afternoon. But even here messages and notes were brought to him, and he attended to business. At half-past three he returned to the divan, and after giving audience, remained there, after taking a slight repast, diligently employing himself till ten or eleven o'clock at night. During this evening sitting he generally found time for a game or two at chess, a person, who seems to have been a sort of court buffoon, being in attendance to play with him.

The following is Mr. St. John's account of his general habits and manners :—

"Both the Pasha and his court are very plain at Alexandria ; but at Cairo, where, however, he spends but a small portion of the year, things are conducted with more state, though he is everywhere extremely accessible. Any person who has leisure, and knows no better mode of employing it, may go every evening to the palace, whether he have business there or not ; and if he does not choose to force himself upon the notice of the Pasha, he can enter into any of the other magnificent apartments, which are lighted up, as well as the audience chamber, and converse, if he pleases, with some of the numerous company there assembled. To show his Highness's close habits of business, it has been remarked to me, that when accidentally indisposed at Alexandria, and compelled to take exercise in his carriage instead of on horseback, he is known constantly to take out with him the public despatches. Driving to the banks of the canal, he has his

carpet spread upon the ground, and there, while coffee is preparing, he usually sits, reading and sealing his despatches. He will then enjoy his coffee and pipe, and afterwards return directly to the palace. This is one of his recreations. In the harem, he reads or has books read to him, or amuses himself by conversing with the abler part of the eunuchs. At other times he is employed in dictating his history ; or in playing at chess, to which, like most other Orientals, he appears to be passionately addicted. In fact his active restless temper will never suffer him to be unoccupied, and when not engaged with graver and more important affairs, he descends even to meddling. Nothing is too minute for him. For example, a young Egyptian Turk, educated in the school of Cairo, now professor of mathematics, and teacher of the young officers at Alexandria, is compelled every week to give him an exact account of the manner in which each of his pupils pursues his studies. During the period in which he was pushing forward the preparations necessary for putting his fleet to sea, a much smaller portion of the day than usual was devoted to his audiences and ordinary business. Indeed he would frequently give audience in the arsenal, where he spent a considerable part of his time; after which he used to step into his little elegant state barge, and cause himself to be rowed out into the harbour among his ships, to observe the progress of the naval architects and shipwrights; and urge them forward by his presence; and in these little excursions of business he was sometimes so deeply interested, that he would not return to the palace before twelve o'clock; thus greatly abridging his hours of relaxation. The accidents of the weather never interfere with his resolutions. He will sometimes set out on a journey in the midst of a heavy shower of rain or a storm, which has more than once caused him very serious illness. His movements are sudden

and unexpected : he appears in Cairo or at Alexandria when least looked for, which maintains a certain degree of vigilance among the agents of government ; though something of all this may perhaps be set down to caprice or affectation. In the gardens of Shoubra there is a small alcove, where the Pasha, during his brief visits to that palace, will frequently sit, about eleven or twelve o'clock at night, and, dismissing from about him all his courtiers and attendants, remain for an hour or two. From this alcove two long vistas, between cypress, orange, and citron trees, diverge and extend the whole length of the grounds ; and in the calm bright nights of the East, by moon or star light, when the air is perfumed by the faint odours of the most delicate flowers, a more delicious or romantic station could hardly be found."—St. John's 'Egypt and Mahomed Ali,' Lond. 1834.

The substantial wealth of Egypt consists in its extraordinary power of agricultural production. In that country, wherever there is water there is fertility ; and by irrigation, combined with even the rudest forms of cultivation, the desert itself may be subdued, and compelled to retreat. Much has been done, under the government of Mohammad 'Alee, to render the waste fruitful. The supply of water indeed, which depends on the inundations of the Nile, may be deficient, and other causes also may occasionally destroy the hopes of the husbandman, such as the hot winds of the desert, which sometimes dry up whole districts, even after irrigation, or a flight of locusts, which, darkening the atmosphere to a vast extent, descends in a dense mass on the fields of grain, and devours and destroys everything. Happily these checks to the fertility of Egypt are rare and partial. Mohammad 'Alee, however, has made many and vigorous attempts to render Egypt independent (as it is called) of other countries, by the introduction of manufactures. His efforts have been

attended with little success ; and the wisdom of his policy in this matter may well be doubted. Every hand in Egypt which is transferred from agricultural labour to the manufactures which have been artificially introduced into the country, is removed from a productive and profitable employment to one which has been exceedingly expensive, and, with few exceptions, unsuccessful and profitless. The loss, however, has fallen wholly on the treasury of the Pasha, and not on the consumers. Cotton manufactures, which are those chiefly produced in his factories, cost him more than the articles can be imported for, notwithstanding the low price of labour and the extreme cheapness of the raw material.

Mr. Lane has the following remarks on the changes which have been introduced into Egypt by Mohammad 'Alee.

"The exaggerated reports which have been spread in Europe respecting late innovations, and the general advance of civilization, in Egypt, induce me to add a few lines on these subjects. European customs have not yet begun to spread among the Egyptians themselves ; but they probably will ere long ; and, in the expectation that this will soon be the case, I have been most anxious to become well acquainted (before it be too late to make the attempt) with a state of society which has existed, and excited a high degree of interest, for many centuries, and which many persons have deemed almost immutable.

"The account which I have given of the present state of the government of this country shows how absurd is the assertion, that Egypt possesses a legislative assembly that can, with any degree of propriety, be called representative of the people. The will of the Pasha is almost absolute ; but he has certainly effected a great reform, by the introduction of European military and naval tactics, the results of which have already been considerable, and will be yet more extensive, and,

in most respects, desirable. Already it has removed a great portion of that weight of prejudice which has so long prevented the Turks from maintaining their relative rank among the nations of the civilized world: by convincing them that one of our branches of science and practice is so far superior to that to which they were accustomed, it has made them in general willing, if not desirous, to learn what more we are able to teach them. One of its effects already manifest might be regarded by an unreflecting mind as of no importance; but is considered by philosophical Muslim as awfully portentous, and hailed by the Christian as an omen of the brightest promise. The Turks have been led to imitate us in our luxuries: several of the more wealthy began by adopting the use of the knife and fork: the habit of openly drinking wine immediately followed; and has become common among a great number of the higher officers of the government. That a remarkable indifference to religion is indicated by this innovation is evident; and the principles of the dominant class will doubtless spread (though they have not yet done so) among the inferior members of the community. The former have begun to undermine the foundations of El-Islám: the latter as yet seem to look on with apathy, or at least with resignation to the decrees of Providence; but they will probably soon assist in the work; and the overthrow of the whole fabric may reasonably be expected to ensue at a period not very remote.

"The acquisition of a powerful empire, independent of the Porte, appears to have been the grand, and almost the sole, object of the present Pásha of Egypt. He has introduced many European sciences, arts, and manufactures; but all in furtherance of this project; for his new manufactures have impoverished his people. He has established a printing-office; but the works which have issued from it are almost

solely intended for the instruction of his military, naval, and civil servants. A newspaper is printed at another press, in the Citadel : its paragraphs, however, are seldom on any other subject than the affairs of the government. It is in Turkish and Arabic. Sometimes, three numbers of it appear in a week : at other times, only one is published in a month.

"I have candidly stated my opinion, that the policy of Mohammad 'Alee is in several respects erroneous ; and that his people are severely oppressed : but the circumstances in which he has been placed offer large excuses for his severity. To judge of his character fairly, we should compare him with another Turkish reformer, his late nominal sovereign, the Sultan Mahmood. In every point of view he has shown his superiority to the latter; and especially in the discipline of his forces. While the Sultan was more closely imitating us in trivial matters (as for instance, in the new military dress which he introduced), Mohammad 'Alee aimed at, and attained, more important objects.* When we would estimate his character by the massacre of the Memlooks, a fact most painful to reflect upon, we should admit that he had recourse to this horrid expedient for a most desirable end."

* The dress worn by the military and some other officers of the Pásha of Egypt is still quite Turkish in every thing but the want of the turban, which is now worn by few of those persons, and only in winter ; the red cap alone, over which the muslin or Kashmeer shawl used always to be wound, being at present the regular head-dress. The trousers are very full from the waist to a little below the knee, overhanging a pair of tight leggings which form part of them. A tight vest (the sleeves of which are divided from the wrist nearly to the elbow, but generally buttoned at this part), a girdle, a jacket with hanging sleeves, socks, and a pair of red shoes, complete the outward dress generally worn ; but the jacket is sometimes made with sleeves like those of the vest above described, and the vest without sleeves ; and black European shoes are worn by some persons. The sword is now hung in our manner by a waist-belt. The dress of the private soldiers consists of a vest and trousers (the latter similar to those above described, but not so full), of a kind of coarse red serge, or, in summer, of white cotton, with the girdle, red cap, and red shoes.

The following account of the government of Egypt is abridged from Mr. Lane's 'Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians,' Lond. 1842.

Egypt has, of late years, experienced great political changes, and nearly ceased to be a province of the Turkish Empire. Its present Pásha (Mohammad 'Alee), having exterminated the Ghuzz, or Memlooks, who shared the government with his predecessors, has rendered himself almost an independent prince. He, however, professes allegiance to the Sultán, and remits the tribute, according to the former custom, to Constantinople: he is, moreover, under an obligation to respect the fundamental laws of the Kur-án and the Traditions; but he exercises a dominion otherwise unlimited. He may cause any one of his subjects to be put to death without the formality of a trial, or without assigning any cause: a simple horizontal motion of his hand is sufficient to imply the sentence of décapitation. But he is not prone to shed blood without any reason: severity is a characteristic of this prince, rather than wanton cruelty; and boundless ambition has prompted him to almost every action by which he has attracted either praise or censure.

In the Citadel of Cairo is a court of judicature, called 'ed-Deewán el-Khideewee,' where in the Pásha's absence presides his 'Kikhya,' or deputy. In cases which do not fall within the province of the Kádee, or which are sufficiently clear to be decided without referring them to the court of that officer, or to another council, the president of the Deewán el-Khideewee passes judgment. Numerous guard-houses have been established throughout the metropolis, at each of which is stationed a body of Nizám, or regular troops. Persons accused of thefts, assaults, &c., in Cairo, are given in charge to a soldier of the guard, who takes them to the chief guard-house, in the Mooskee, a street in

that part of the town in which most of the Franks reside. The charges being here stated, and committed to writing, he conducts them to the 'Zábit,' or chief magistrate of the police of the metropolis. The Zábit, having heard the case, sends the accused for trial to the Deewán el-Khidéewee.* When a person denies the offence with which he is charged, and there is not sufficient evidence to convict him, but some ground of suspicion, he is generally bastinaded, in order to induce him to confess; and then, if not before, when the crime is not of a nature that renders him obnoxious to a very heavy punishment, he, if guilty, admits it. A thief, after this discipline, generally confesses, "The devil seduced me, and I took it." The punishment of the convicts is regulated by a system of arbitrary, but lenient and wise, policy: it usually consists in their being compelled to labour, for a scanty sustenance, in some of the public works; such as the removal of rubbish, digging canals, &c.; and sometimes the army is recruited with able-bodied young men convicted of petty offences. The Pásha is, however, very severe in punishing thefts, &c., committed against himself:—death is the usual penalty in such cases.

There are several inferior councils for conducting the affairs of different departments of the administration. The principal of these are the following.—1. The Council of Deliberation. The members of this and of the other similar councils are chosen by the Pásha, for their talents or other qualifications; and consequently his will and interest sway them in all their decisions. They are his instruments, and

* A very arbitrary power is often exercised in this and similar courts, and the proceedings are conducted with little decorum. Many Turkish officers, even of the highest rank, make use of language far too disgusting to be mentioned towards persons brought before them for judgment and towards those who appeal to them for justice.

compose a committee for presiding over the general government of the country, and the commercial and agricultural affairs of the Pásha. Petitions, &c., addressed to the Pásha, or to his Deewán, relating to private interests or the affairs of the government, are generally submitted to their consideration and judgment, unless they more properly come under the cognizance of other councils hereafter to be mentioned. 2. The Council of the Army. The province of this court is sufficiently shown by its name. 3. The Council of the Navy. 4. The Court of the Merchants. This court, the members of which are merchants of various countries and religions, was instituted in consequence of the laws of the Kur-án and the Sunneh being found not sufficiently explicit in some cases arising out of modern commercial transactions.

The '*Kádee*' (or chief judge) of Cairo presides in Egypt only a year, at the expiration of which term, a new *Kádee* having arrived from Constantinople, the former returns. He purchases his place privately of the government, which pays no particular regard to his qualifications; though he must be a man of some knowledge, an 'Osmanlee (that is, a Turk), and of the sect of the Hanafees. Few *Kádees* are very well acquainted with the Arabic language; nor is it necessary for them to have such knowledge. In Cairo, the *Kádee* has little or nothing to do but to confirm the sentence of his '*Naïb*' (or deputy), who hears and decides the more ordinary cases, and whom he chooses from among the '*Ulama* of Istambool, or the decision of the '*Muftee*' (or chief doctor of the law) of his own sect, who constantly resides in Cairo, and gives judgment in all cases of difficulty. But in general, the *Naïb* is, at the best, but little conversant with the popular dialect of Egypt; therefore, in Cairo, where the chief proportion of the litigants at the tribunal of the

Kádee are Arabs, the judge must place the utmost confidence in the Chief Interpreter, whose place is permanent, and who is consequently well acquainted with all the customs of the court, particularly with the system of bribery; and this knowledge he is generally very ready to communicate to every new Kádee and Náib. A man may be grossly ignorant of the law, and yet hold the office of Kádee of Cairo: several instances of this kind have occurred; but the Náib must be a lawyer of learning and experience.

There are five minor courts of justice in Cairo; and likewise one at its principal port, Boolák; and one at its southern port, Masr El-Ateekah. A deputy of the chief Kádee presides at each of them, and confirms their acts. The matters submitted to these minor tribunals are chiefly respecting the sales of property, and legacies, marriages, and divorces; for the Kádee marries female orphans under age who have no relations of age to act as their guardians; and wives often have recourse to law to compel their husbands to divorce them. In every country town there is also a Kádee, generally a native of the place, but never a Turk, who decides all cases, sometimes from his own knowledge of the law, but commonly on the authority of a Muftee. One Kádee generally serves for two or three or more villages.

Each of the four orthodox sects of the Muslims has its 'Sheykh,' or religious chief, who is chosen from among the most learned of the body, and resides in the metropolis; and these sheykhs, together with the Kádee, the Nakeeb el-Ashraf (the chief of the Shereefs, or descendants of the Prophet), and several other persons, constitute the 'Ulama (or learned men), by whom the Turkish Páshas and Memlook chiefs have often been kept in awe, and by whom their tyranny has frequently been restricted: but now this learned body

has lost almost all its influence over the government. Petty disputes are often, by mutual consent of the parties at variance, submitted to the judgment of one of the four Sheykhs first mentioned, as they are the chief Muftees of their respective sects ; and the utmost deference is always paid to them. Difficult and delicate causes, which concern the laws of the Kur-án or the Traditions, are also frequently referred by the Pásha to these Sheykhs ; but their opinion is not always followed by him.

The police of the metropolis is more under the direction of the military than of the civil power. The chief of the police is called the Zábit. His officers, who have no distinguishing mark to render them known as such, are interpersed through the metropolis : they often visit the coffee-shops, and observe the conduct, and listen to the conversation, of the citizens. Many of them are pardoned thieves. They accompany the military guards in their nightly rounds through the streets of the metropolis. Here, none but the blind are allowed to go out at night later than about an hour and a half after sunset, without a lantern or a light of some kind. Few persons are seen in the streets later than two or three hours after sunset. At the fifth or sixth hour, one might pass through the whole length of the metropolis and scarcely meet more than a dozen or twenty persons, excepting the watchmen and guards, and the porters at the gates of the by-streets and quarters.

The markets of Cairo, and the weights and measures, are under the inspection of an officer called the 'Mohtes'ib.' He occasionally rides about the town, preceded by an officer who carries a large pair of scales, and followed by the executioners and numerous other servants. Passing by shops, or through the markets, he orders each shopkeeper, one after another, or sometimes only one here and there, to pro-

duce his scales, weights, and measures, and tries whether they be correct. He also inquires the prices of provisions at the shops where such articles are sold. Often, too, he stops a servant, or other passenger, in the street, whom he may chance to meet carrying any article of food that he has just bought, and asks him for what sum, or at what weight, he purchased it. When he finds that a shopkeeper has incorrect scales, weights, or measures, or that he has sold a thing deficient in weight, or above the regular market-place, he punishes him on the spot. The general punishment is beating or flogging.

As the Mohtes'ib is the overseer of the public markets, so there are officers who have a similar charge in superintending each branch of the Pásha's trade and manufactures; and some of these persons have been known to perpetrate most abominable acts of tyranny and cruelty.

Every quarter in the metropolis has its sheykh, whose influence is exerted to maintain order, to settle any trifling disputes among the inhabitants, and to expel those who disturb the peace of their neighbours. The whole of the metropolis is also divided into eight districts, over each of which is a sheykh.

The members of various trades and manufactures in the metropolis and other large towns have also their respective sheykhs, to whom all disputes respecting matters connected with those trades or crafts are submitted for arbitration; and whose sanction is required for the admission of new members.

The servants in the metropolis are likewise under the authority of particular sheykhs. Any person in want of a servant may procure one by applying to one of these officers, who, for a small fee (two or three piastres), becomes responsible for the conduct of the man whom he recommends. Should a servant so engaged rob his master, the latter gives

information to the sheykh, who, whether he can recover the stolen property or not, must indemnify the master.

The Coptic Patriarch, who is the head of his church, judges petty causes among his people in the metropolis; and the inferior clergy do the same in other places; but an appeal may be made to the Kádee. A Muslim aggrieved by a Copt may demand justice from the Patriarch or the Kádee; a Copt who seeks redress from a Muslim must apply to the Kádee. The Jews are similarly circumstanced. The Franks or Europeans in general, are not answerable to any other authority than that of their respective consuls, excepting when they are aggressors against a Muslim: they are then surrendered to the Turkish authorities, who, on the other hand, render justice to the Frank who is aggrieved by a Muslim.

The inhabitants of the country towns and villages are under the government of Turkish officers and of their own countrymen. The whole of Egypt is divided into several large provinces, each of which is governed by an 'Osmanlee (or a Turk); and these provinces are subdivided into districts, which are governed by native officers. Every village, as well as town, has also its Sheykh, who is one of the native Muslim inhabitants.

The revenue of the Pásha of Egypt is generally said to amount to about three millions of pounds sterling. Nearly half arises from the direct taxes on land, and from indirect exactions from the felláhs: the remainder principally from the custom-taxes, the tax on palm-trees, a kind of income-tax, and the sale of various productions of the land; by which sale, the government, in most instances, obtains a profit of more than fifty per cent.

The present Pásha has increased his revenue to this amount by most oppressive measures. He has dispossessed

of their lands almost all the private proprietors throughout Egypt, allotting to each, as a partial compensation, a pension for life, proportioned to the extent and quality of the land which belonged to him. The farmer has, therefore, nothing to leave to his children but his hut, and perhaps a few cattle and some small savings.

The direct taxes on land are proportioned to the natural advantages of the soil. Their average amount is about 8s. per feddán, which is somewhat less than an English acre. But the cultivator can never calculate exactly the full amount of what the government will require of him. The felláh, to supply the bare necessities of life, is often obliged to steal, and convey secretly to his hut, as much as he can of the produce of his land. He may either himself supply the seed for his land, or obtain it as a loan from the government: but in the latter case he seldom obtains a sufficient quantity; a considerable portion being generally stolen by the persons through whose hands it passes before he receives it. The oppressions which the peasantry of Egypt endure from the dishonesty of the Ma-moors and inferior officers are indescribable. It would be scarcely possible for them to suffer more, and live.

The Pásha has not only taken possession of the lands of the private proprietors, but he has also thrown into his treasury a considerable proportion of the incomes of religious and charitable institutions, deeming their accumulated wealth superfluous. The *household* property of the mosques and other public institutions the Pásha has hitherto left inviolate.

The tax upon the palm-trees has been calculated to amount to about a hundred thousand pounds sterling.

The income-tax is generally a twelfth or more of a man's annual income or salary, when that can be ascertained. The

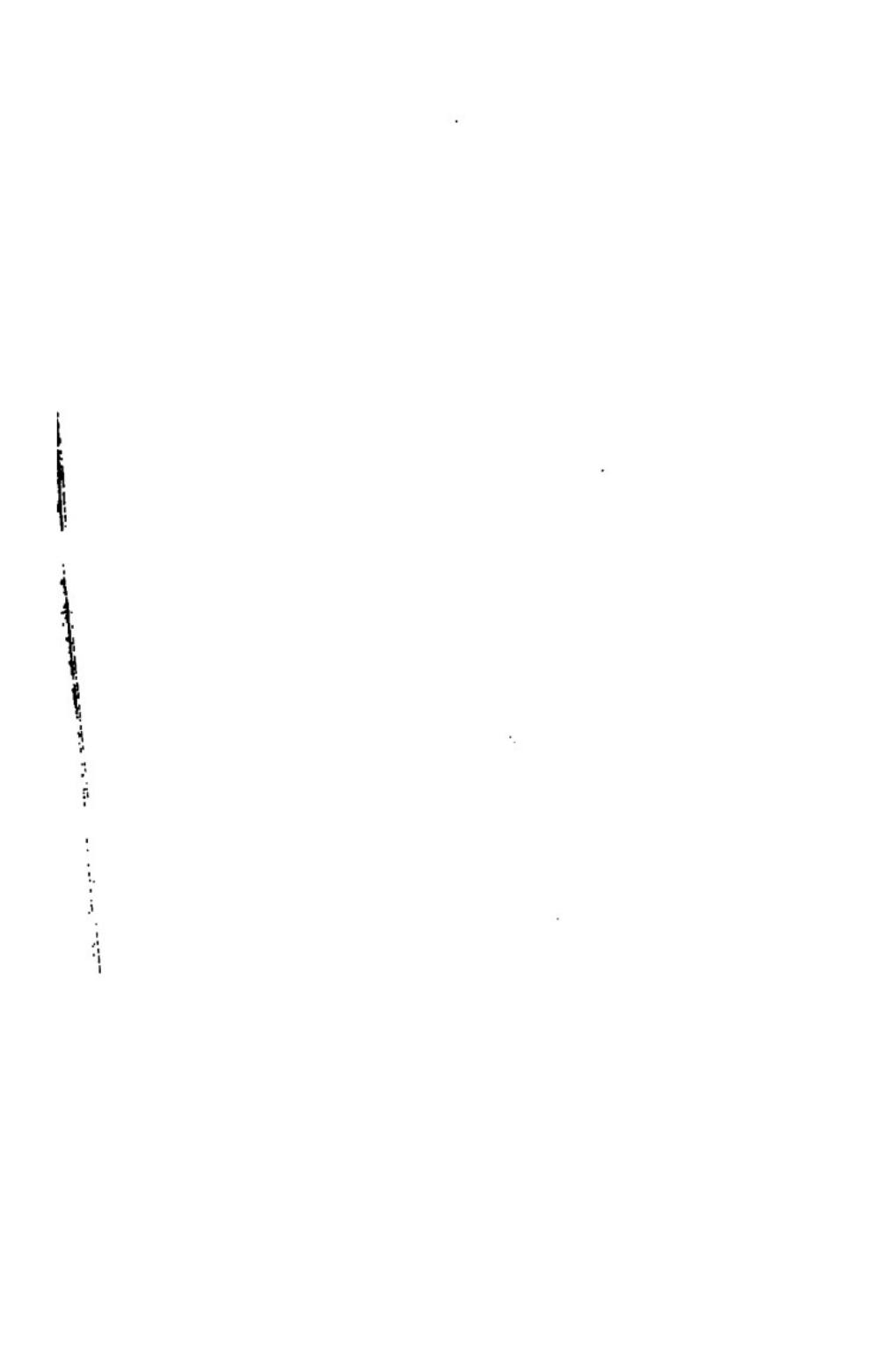
maximum, however, is fixed at five hundred piastres. In the large towns it is levied upon individuals; in the villages, upon houses. The income-tax of all the inhabitants of the metropolis amounts to eight thousand purses, or about forty thousand pounds sterling.

The inhabitants of the metropolis and of other large towns pay a heavy tax on grain, &c.*

* It remains to be added that great changes are now being made in various departments. Most of the evils of which the people of Egypt have hitherto had to complain have arisen from the vast expense incurred in war, from the conscription, and from the dishonesty of almost all the Pasha's civil officers.

THE END.





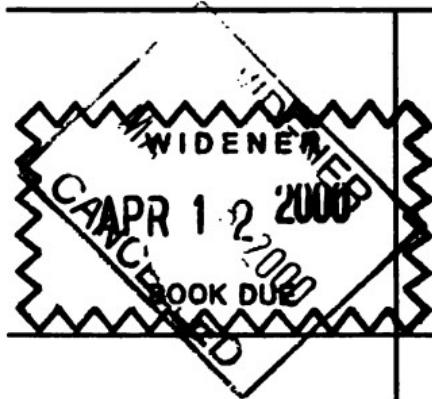


3 2044 019 135 185

The borrower must return this item on or before the last date stamped below. If another user places a recall for this item, the borrower will be notified of the need for an earlier return.

Non-receipt of overdue notices does not exempt the borrower from overdue fines.

Harvard College Widener Library
Cambridge, MA 02138 617-495-2413



Please handle with care.
Thank you for helping to preserve
library collections at Harvard.

